Vol. X, No. 2 APRIL—JUNE, 1963

TAMIL CULTURE

JOURNAL OF THE ACADEMY OF TAMIL CULTURE

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The Novelist of the City of Madras

XAVIER S. THANI NAYAGAM

The Tamil novel in the forties and fifties of this century was striving to come into its own and striving to shake off influences of English or other European models. The movement for independence, and the independent thinking brought to bear on the social evils, not always justly or equitably attributed to foreign rule, and social reforms badly needed in the country, gave origin also to the independent Tamil novel, the novel seeking to portray the experience of life such as an independent novelist saw it in the Tamil country. But at this stage the plot and tenor of the novel were conditioned by two circumstances. The novel was often serialised in the new weeklies or monthlies which were being published from Madras, and were then developing a wide circulation. In a limited purchasing economy, it helped the book trade and the circulation of the periodical to publish a novel in serial form before finally issuing it as a book. The writer of the serialised novel had to work out his plot in such a manner that the end of one week's published material would leave his readers in suspense and excitement and guessing the nature of the coming instalment. The desire to give unexpected thrills dominated the plot of the novel. The forties and fifties was also the period of development of the Tamil film, and the novelist kept in view also the possibility of his story providing for a vivacious scenario. Hence novelists either consciously or unconsciously worked

out plots which would turn out to be good film material, language and dialogue which would sound suitable on the screen.

Professor Varadharasan who combines a Chair of Tamil with creative writing is the novelist for the novel's sake whose writing is not determined by serialised publication or by the prospective scenario. Professor Varadharasan is wrapped in his own philosophy of life, in his own sympathy for suffering and in his own reflective thinking. He does not appear to write primarily for money or for popularity; his books are the honest reflection of his vision and philosophy of life, and the result of his concept of the novel as a literary genre and a work of art.

MADRAS SCENES

Varadharasan is eminently the novelist of the city, and of one city, and that city is the city of Madras. He might bring in the Tamil quarter in Matunga, Bombay, the Rashbihari avenue in Calcutta, Karolbagh in Delhi, or Haridhwar by the Ganges, but even when he does so, these places are connected with Madras. Even when his characters live in other parts of India, the novelist betrays his nostalgia for Madras. The Tamil village and the township also engage his attention, but he is happier and more successful with Madras city. He describes the familiar landmarks of Madras ; his episodes are located on the beach, the Marina, Parry's corner, Egmore, in the slum areas which he sees in all their misery. One who has walked a few of the streets of Madras, Mount Road not excepted, will realise what he means when he says,

> "If you walk in Madras from Pachayappa's buildings to Parry's corner you will have understood a great deal of life........ Between Pachayappa's buildings and

> Parry's corner there is a whole wide world. Whenever I have walked that distance I have come to realise whole new truths."[1]

He utilises to the full the privacy possible in a large city where his characters from the village may move about without the interference and knowledge of goodwilled but gossipy and prying neighbours.

> "If anything should happen in the future, live in the city. They will not despise you. They will permit anything at all."[2]

His scenes are laid in quarters of the city where the pressure of population is greatest, where crowds surge towards the evening, and not in the leisurely mansions and park-like gardens of Adyar and Nungambakkum. Varadharasan loves the crowded areas of Madras, the busy crowds along Broadway and China Bazaar, the strolling crowds of Triplicane, San Thome and the Marina,—the competitive and querulous crowds of Egmore and suburban railway stations, and the milling crowds such as Madras witnessed on the illuminated eve of Indian Independence.

He enters into the spirit of the avocations in Madras, the evening stroll on the Marina, the music recitals and solo dances and the literary, political and religious meetings in a city which has cultivated platform oratory as a fine art, and where listening to public speeches is more of a pastime than sports, picnics or week-ends. His minor characters, like the people in Madras, frequent literary and political gatherings and his important characters expound literary and economic themes to audiences avid like the Athenians for something new.

1. Karittuṇḍu. 2. Malar viḻi.

Varadharasan's novels have several elements of autobiographical interest, and his knowledge of Madras as in the novels is the ripe knowledge of a man in his forties, familiar with the city as a student, lecturer, professor and scholar, and familiar with all levels of society except perhaps the smart set and the westernised or sophisticated society of the Cosmopolitan and the Gymkhana Clubs, and the Connemara and Oceanic hotels. His knowledge of the middle class is most intimate and he reproduces very accurately their conversations with their banter and sense of humour. The Tamil novelists of the mid-century are aware of the changing pattern of life in a growing, developing, Madras with its post-war urbanisation and conurbation problems. They are also aware of the increase of hotels and rented rooms for a shifting population, and hence introduce them increasingly as locations for certain episodes in their novels. They are aware of the new modes of life which the newfound freedom for woman has brought about, her equality with men in offices, her independent life possible in hostels and rented lodgings, and her aversion to arranged marriages. Varadharasan utilises this changing pattern of the social role of woman, and declares she will be equal to man and enjoy a true freedom, and marry on equal terms once she can be economically independent. The teaching profession is the one which she may adopt with dignity and safety.

SOCIAL REFORM

The Tamil novelist of the mid-century is pre-eminently concerned with the fields of social reform. These reforms were to form the fruits of independence won during the post-war period. The gruelling poverty which he saw in the streets, the semi-starva-

tion which haunted a large section of the population, the disproportion which existed between the long hours of hard labour and the pittance received in return, the easy and gracious life of the wealthy, their homes, their automobiles, their servants and their morals, compared with the pavement life of the poor or their hen coop-huts, come in for subjects of argument and discussion in the novels. Communist propaganda material, the Tamil translations of the novels of Victor Hugo and Tolstoy and contemporary movements for social legislation also opened the eyes of novelists to the misery they saw in the streets of the cities of Tamil Nad as well as in its villages, and they portrayed characters who could argue for and against the movements for a fairer distribution of wealth. Bharati was concerned with the sufferings of the Tamil labourer in Fiji, Burma, and Ceylon, but in the mid-century the Tamil novelist has become sensitive to the poverty and filth and hunger in his immediate neighbourhood.

Varadharasan is equally heir to this burden of deliverance and the delineation of an Utopia which might well come into being if the *Tirukkural* became the text-book of politicians and there were a fairer redistribution of wealth. But Varadharasan brings to bear, in addition, an agonising sympathy with those who suffer poverty or injustice and moral degradation. He proposes State housing schemes for the poor and co-operatives to market their produce. His characters debate the chasm which exists between the Indian "they" and "us". With considerable skill, perhaps influenced by a study of Bernard Shaw, Varadharasan brings into the argument characters who would like to accept cynically the evils of a world which cannot be reformed as well as idealist characters who crusade for a cause, and are prepared to suffer and give up their

lives for a cause. The discussion is always well balanced, offering argument and counter argument, often seeming to demolish the author's own views which he has built up with considerable care.

Social reforms and a better distribution of wealth are hindered not only by a lack of social consciousness and of state legislation but also by an unscrupulous wealthy class which enters politics and causes the abuse and miscarriage of justice. Varadharasan brings in elections and electioneering campaigns and the attendant perquisities, bribes and mal-practices into ridicule. He portrays with trenchant irony the philistinism of the candidates, the hangers-on, the sycophants, the ghost writers of political speeches and the swift turncoating from party and even the misuse of religion for political ends. The police come in for some rough but justifiable handling comparable a little to their own handling of the helpless. The guardians of law when it comes to dealing with the poor and the uneducated, assume the role of Titans and rule by threats and illiterate bravado, an accurate verdict on the uneducated, awkward-marching, blustering, bribe-taking, brawny not brainy, evidence-concocting rank and file of the police of Madras. The difference of treatment meted out by the police to the rich is always noted and even the corruption to which the judiciary may be subject, is not excluded from his censure.

The official class lives by the fawning simper of thriving adulation of their superiors. Ānavar in *Kayamai*, taking his lime-fruits and betel and sacred ash to the Collector, and his garlands on birthdays to the people whose favours he required, his diary lined up with a list of birthdays, is the type of the corrupt Head Clerk in Office, who abuses his official powers

for his own ends. The corruption in Government departments, the jobbery, the wives who accept bribes for their husbands, and the respect and attention measured out in proportion to a person's wealth and dress and general physical appearance, so much in evidence in Government offices, is invariably noted by Varadharasan.

DESCRIPTION AND CHARACTER

The life in Madras with its populated streets, its 'coffee clubs', its variegated and colourful population, its festivals and its periodic floods are background of his novels. The buses and that noisy electric train tearing through the city from the Beach to Tambaram, the beat of the surf on the Marina, are sounds in which his ear delights. He indulges rarely in minute descriptions of rooms, places, of houses, of furniture, of nature, or even of physical beauty. Even the Taj Mahal evokes but a parsimonious description. He seems most absorbed with human types, their problems and their discussions and the ideas he would like to propagate. Hence his characters are marked by keen intellectualism and dialectics. They are the creations of a very reflective and interrogative thinker and sometimes seem like the surfaces of Egyptian sculpture. They would change to a three dimensional impression if they were charged with greater impression of flesh and blood and a greater emotional life. As they are, they seem to be sometimes differrent voices of human types introduced for the purpose of conveying the author's mental processes on topical problems.

The novelist of the city of Madras, one may say, is above all, a novelist with a purpose. He portrays life, and portrays it with a discernment and a reflection which make him one of the most lucid thinkers

among the Tamil novelists of today. But his thinking is didactic and pedagogic. The novel is to him both a work of art as well as his main platform. The teacher in Varadharasan is even more evident than the novelist, since his characters and situations are didactic and pedagogic. Varadharasan is the objective research worker, thinker and scholar who has turned novelist, in contrast with writers of fiction in Tamil Nad who have turned research workers.

DIDACTISM IN THE NOVEL

In several situations and in passing observations, he tries to inculcate some little moral, some point of good manners, or even some recommended method of study which will shape the lives of his readers. Just as his characters are types of people to be met with in Tamil urban society, his situations are also 'typical' situations and these situations are worked in to teach a moral. His novels have generally two types to further the argument, one a hard-boiled pragmatist who presents the case for the *status quo*, and is cynical about ever being able to changing society or human nature, another type is the idealist who crusades for changing the evils rampant in society with all the fervour of an impractical idealism. The novelist himself seems to be on the side of the idealist but modifies his extreme idealism with experience and common sense.

Venkatesan, in *Kayamai* probably gives the novelist's prescription for the evolution of a better world.

> " Does the world repudiate the bully and the bad man ? No. It gives him influence and prestige ! What does that show but that the world is not yet fully cultured ? Therefore in an uncultured world what should the cultured do ? One way is to take poison, to be allowed to be crucified, or to be shot by a pistol. Another way is to repu-

> **diate the world as fearful, and hasten to a forest to live as a blind hermit. There is a third way,** *and that is to desire with sincere enthusiasm the reform of the world and to sow the seeds of reform while performing unobtrusively one's own duties.*"

The topics which the characters discuss are social problems with which the novelist is familiar. He might discuss Science as opposed to Nature, or the psychology of the artist, or the value of playing dice, but the discussion invariably tends towards the practical consideration of these questions in the Tamil Nad situation, particularly in the city of Madras. The discussions range over wide fields such as Capitalism, Socialism, Marxism, Gandhism, educational methods and education in the mother tongue, the education of women, arranged marriages, bribery and corruption, omens and superstitions, housing in the city, the beggar problem, personal and social hygiene, unemployment, organised religion and the abuses in temple worship, the evolution of a happier society and the temporary triumph of evil. Even remarks about the temple priests pelting the image with flowers and reciting the *mantras* "with the speed of the mail train" are meant to bring about reform, and are not derisive.

No serious thinker in the face of the colossal social problems of India with its high birth rate and the corresponding slowness with which reforms are effected, particularly when this slowness is due to inefficiency, corruption, jobbery and party politics, can help being cynical as a social satirist. Some of Varadharasan's characters are highly cynical of the existing structure of society and the leadership available to change the structure to a better one. The cynicism leads to caricatures of the politician who should be responsible for social reform.

A candidate for Elections in Madras City, if he wishes to win popularity in order to defeat his rival, is advised to attend regularly so as to be seen by the constituency, worship at the temples, to pay for service and the installation or tube electric lights in temples, to quote extensively from Bakthi poetry, and pretend to be a patron of poetry, music and dance.

> " With charity and piety there should be a third requisite for one who courts popularity, and that is the Fine Arts". " How shall I learn them? Charity is possible if I have money. Piety can be acted or put on. But the Arts?" " Not all those who wear the sacred ash and frequent temples are devotees. Several go to the temple for a good name. Such too is art. What does it matter if you know not the rudiments of music? Purchase a ticket for the first row and just sit tight. What matters it if you know nothing about the dance? Go to a performance and watch her physique: That's what most people do!"

And in another place the candidate is instructed by the two rascally associates as to what he should do when he appears in public.

> " Speak of great ideals in public and emphasise above all good conduct and morality. Say that alcohol is the root of all evils, and that bribery should disappear altogether from the land. Say that this land is a divine land, and here were born the great Mahatmas of all time. Insist that we should tread the path of our ancestors. If you will memorise any two verses from the *Tirukkuṟal* that should be enough. Insert here and there in the speech the names of Buddha, Swami Ramalingam, Gandhi. Say that one should not be selfish, that one should not be attached to money, and that one should learn to love a life of service. This brief introduction, and then sit down. The speakers after you will commence to praise you and your speech. Āṉavar and I and a few others will start applauding every time the speakers refer to you and the audience will follow. That will be sufficient advertisement."

Aṉavar, (*Kayamai*) the villain of the piece, gives a public lecture under the chairmanship of the candidate for elections on the subject of "The Greatness of Good Conduct." The inconsistencies between public pronouncements and private conduct are always contrasted like "those that praise basic education from the platform but send their children to convent schools and western methods." *Man kudisai* contains a strong indictment of Indian divergence between precept and practice, and says that Westerners are much better in this regard, since they do not praise in public what they do not practise in private. The more progressive West is a repeated phrase in discussions.

The problem of Evil and the success of evil-doors in the world is a recurrent theme. The argument goes back and forth and in the end is not solved since evil seems to preponderate and succeed. But the blame is not with evil but with those who tolerate it and give room for its success because of their indifference, their inactivity and their lack of courage. Nallayan, the idealist youth, argues:

> "Let Goodness spread, and let Evil disappear, we sing and we proclaim. We see however, Goodness disappear and Evil spread, and we are the cause. We permit evil doers to band together and to gain in strength. We give place to those who act as if they were goodness itself. But to those who are really good, we give them no quarter............"

To which the pragmatist Venkatesan replies:—

> "Goodness is not going to increase or decrease more than what obtains today in the world. Since the beginning of time Good and Evil have appeared together in the same measure. It is useless to be concerned about it.

God protects both Good and Evil. To speak the truth, it looks as if Good is the dutiful child of God and Evil the pet child of God!"

Again: "You cannot change or reform the world, even if in each village you had living a Gandhi, a Buddha and aTiruvaḷḷuvar. It's only if you abolish poverty that Gandhism, *Tirukkural* and the law of love can develop."

THE NOVELIST AND THE RENAISSANCE

Varadharasan the Novelist is as much a product and promoter of the mid-century Tamil movement in prose, as Bharati and the other poets were earlier the promoters of the Tamil Renaissance. His characters discuss and quote literature, especially, the *Silappatikāram* and the *Tirukkural*, as it is actually done in ordinary conversation among the student, teacher and office population in Tamil society, and his lovers re-live the love of the Cankam Age in a twentieth century atmosphere. The characters of the *Epic of theAnklet* are proto types of marital fidelity or devotion to Art and are in constant demand by the novelist to set an example for lofty behaviour or in justification or explanation of moral deviation. The poems of the Cangam classics and the devotional poems often come in as quotations, but above all, the *Tirukkuṟal* is the one book by which Varadharasan and his characters, swear. Not only is it the ready reference and guide, but whole lives are fashioned or changed by its study and the observance of its maxims. Individual heroes and heroines carry a copy about with them and read it at their office desks: North Indian residents in Madras learn it along with their Tamil and cite it

in Northern India; families make it a daily observance to read or study a chapter of ten verses; and the life of the Bengalee Nirmala, a Calcutta socialite in *Karittundu* changes from one of dissipation and frivolity to a highly serious minded devotion to service and rectitude because of the study of the maxims of Tiruvaḷḷuvar commenced in her twenties or thirties. A professor of Psychology expounds it in Bombay in English for non-Tamil audiences, and the novelist finds all his idealism in this ancient and truly incomparable ethical and humanist codex.

It is evident that the Tamil classical age furnishes a deep background in thought and expression for Varadharasan's novels. *Kayamai* has been inspired by the ten verses of Tiruvaḷḷuvar on Villainy. There is no parallel word in English for kayamai. It includes meanness, villainy, wickedness, and a Iago-like character. The problem of the artist's temperament seems to have an origin in the temperamental nature of Kovalan and Matavi in the Epic *Sillapatikāram*, and the language of the novelist's lovers in the love poetry of the classics. Even casual statements in the novels recall familiar lines of classical poetry. For instance, he says of the effects of poverty "What does not enter the abject huts of the poor? Art, chastity, charity, murder, adultery, cruelty all these are to be found there."

COMPARE WITH MANIMĒKALAI

"Poverty will destroy nobility corresponding to birth; it can kill greatness; it can make the learned forsake the fruits of learning, it can destroy shame and respect; it can lead to lechery." While he looks on the Ganges, the fact that the Cankam poets too have praised it commends the river to his esteem.

REFORM AND PROGRESS

Varadharasan seeks to reform Tamil society very manifestly in his novels. Reform and Progress, may be claimed, to be the purpose of all his fiction. The hospitality and friendliness of the Tamil to non-Tamil (Indians or foreigners) and other favourable aspects of the Tamil character, he seeks to impress by statements of non-Tamil persons. The Tamil lack of a love of the mother tongue, he castigates too, through North Indians who have learnt Tamil during a temporary residence in Madras, and are able to quote the *Tirukkural*, while Tamil pilgrims to Banaras cannot :

> "In our homes" says the Hindi speaker, "even the old women can quote slokas. What Kumarlal said is true. The Tamils have no love of race or of their mother-tongue. That's the reason they are on the decline."

Through a great number of tactful suggestions and insinuations distributed all through his novels, Varadharasan endeavours to raise the material, moral and intellectual tone of Tamil society. Sometimes this is done by reflections on life in other parts of India; he would like to teach personal and public cleanliness; the Ganges with dead bodies and rubbish hurled into the waters of purification gives him the occasion.

Varadharasan's didacticism invariably draws inspiration from a great many religious leaders and reformers of the world, and from their great books. With the mind of a syncretist and with no allegiance to any organized religion, Varadharasan, quotes the examples and sayings of Christ, of Buddha, of Mahatma Gandhi, Ramakrishna and Ramatirtha.

Several Western and Eastern writers obtain mention in the course of his fiction, some of them writers who have influenced him. A few novelists he mentions in the course of his novels are Dickens, Victor Hugo, Tolstoy, Tagore, H. G. Wells, Pearl S. Buck.

As in many Eastern novelists of this mid-century, in Varadharasan too there is an ambivalence regarding absolute morality. The novelist does not seem to be sure of himself. There are, on the one hand, the ideals of pre-marital chastity, and the dedicated fidelity traditional to the Tamil wife, but on the other hand there is a certain freedom which the novelist would concede, to choose a partner by mutual consent. He hesitates between the absolute values postulated by tradition and religion, and the changing values of a changing society. The great problem of pre-marital and marital morality is an important theme in his novels as it is in actual life; sometimes he seems severe in his condemnation, at other times his attitude is to let the sinless cast the first stone, but there is always hesitancy and honest doubt. He does seek incipient psychoanalytic explanations and justification, but the reader is yet left with the problem.

A reviewer of *Ahal vilakku* has stated that in the book the borders of obscenity are exploited with an adolescent gloating, and that it exthibits "the suggestive viciousness of a school boy going wrong," whatever the phrase means.* The greatest admirer of the reviewer who signed himself Ka Naa Subramanyam is Ka Naa Subramanyam himself, and he seems to have failed in his objectivity, strangely enough at the exact moment when the Sahitya Acadamy at Delhi was considering the grant of an award to the very novel he was crticising. This reviewer

* **Sunday Standard (Madras), March 4th, 1962.**

who seems to write with an omniscience which he deprecates in others, often destroys his own objectivity by a perverse belittling of literary efforts of all writers who are not Brahmins by birth excepting those who belong to the 'Vaiyapuri Pillai' type.*

Novelists tend to repeat themselves in ideas and words, and the novelist of Madras is no exception. His didacticism compels repetition. There is, however, a growing maturity in his repetition, and in his change of scenes from the Tamil country to other parts of India. To trace the development of his thought and technique, one should be aware of the chronological order in which the novels were written. But the publishers give no such information, and a critic must abandon that aspect of study until such data are available.

STYLE AND IDEAS

Varadharasan has economical but suggestive touches when portraying domestic scenes. His characterisation of women remained at the college level in his earlier novels, but has gained in psycho-analytic insight in his later novels. His characters hark back to college days and continue old College friendships. In *Malar viḷi*, the portrait of the woman artist is one of bare statement; in *Karittundu*, the female character has more body and vigour, in *Man kudisai*, and *Nencil oru mul*, the conflict and fluctuations of soul are much more mature. Yet *Karittundu*, perhaps, is the one which answers best the requirements of the novel, in plot, in story, in technique, in style, in pathos, and in the suspense it

* See also his review in *Thought*, July 9, 1960 of 'Anthology of Tamil Poetry' edited by the late Prof. R. P. Sethu Pillai and Published by the Sahitya Academy.

creates. The torso of a pavement artist, deprived of the use of his legs, striving to shuffle himself into the crowded electric train, and maintaining his equanimity and a philosophic temper in the face of rebuff and trial is unforgettable.

Of Varadharasan's mastery of Tamil prose, there can be no two opinions. What was a sonorous and effective instrument of newspaper editorials and platform addresses in Tiru. Vi. Kalyanasundara Mudaliyar, has become a quiet, reflective, unostentatious, and simple yet dignified medium in the hands of Varadharasan. It is clear, limpid and straight-forward except to those who would like to see a sanskritized vocabulary. His dialogues might sound artificial because of their grammatical accuracy and the precise enunciation, but here again Varadharasan is the novelist with a mission, namely, to restore Tamil conversation to Tamil, and withdraw it from the hybrid, anglicised, sanskritised, manipravala jargon affected by sections and classes of Madras with their intromission of English phrases and whole sentences ridiculously sandwiched in Tamil and more ridiculously pronounced. The long final letter of temporary adieu in *Karittundu* is a model of modern Tamil style, born of the richest and humanist traditions of Tamil beauty, ever ancient and ever new.

In the ideas and thought content of his novels, Varadharasan has carried further what Bharati initiated and Thiru. Vi. Kalyanasundara Mudaliyar amplified. The general and prophetic statements of the two concerning the Renaissance in the Tamil country are discussed in Varadharasan's novels in detail and in concreteness according to the social conditions obtaining in particular classes and parti-

cular quarters and regions of the Tamil country. Ideas and discussion dominate Varadharasan's fiction. Ideas are so important that the personality of the characters which express them tends to disappear in the shadows of their ideas. One wonders if his characters are people with an emotional and aesthetic life, or philosophising men and women in whom flesh and blood are not so evident. His characters are remembered, not by their humanity, but by their thought content. No other living writer in Tamil has such a rich topical thought content; it seems anomalous that this thought content should be embodied in fiction.

One proof of his intellectualism and hyper-didacticism, is that there is little laughter and brightness and sunshine in the novels of the novelist of Madras, but a great deal of the still sad music of humanity. His is a masterly and consummate style in Tamil, but one does not find in him bright pictures and colourful scenes. The Tamil equivalent of adjectives and adverbs to denote vivid colour and sound are extremely few in his novels. Faced with the great problem of intellectual, social and material poverty in Madras, perhaps the novelist is preoccupied, and can hardly be cheerful, very much like the Israelites who hung their harps on the willows along the banks of the rivers and canals of Babylon, and sat to weep over the loss of their former glory in Sion.

Tamil Poetry 2000 Years Ago

KAMIL ZVELEBIL

The work of translators and, indeed, of the majority of those who have interpreted to the world Old Indian culture and literature, was till recently devoted to those artists who employed, as their medium of communication, that unique unifying element in the development of Indian culture, Sanskrit, that boundlessly rich, plastic and all-expressive poetic vehicle.

In South India, however, there grew up an independent and characteristic literary tradition, quite independent in its roots and beginnings of the Sanskrit tradition, which, along with other branches of artistic expression, notably music, the visual arts and dancing, points to the clearly marked specific character of the oldest South Indian culture, within the wider framework of all-Indian development and pan-Indian civilization, whose basic features have often been characterized as a hormony of contrasts and a synthesis creating unity out of diversity.

Of the existence of this original literature, which today is counted among the highest achievements of verbal art to be produced in India, the world for long had not the smallest inkling. And yet the claim of the outstanding Bengal scholar, Suniti Kumar Chatterji, is not exaggerated when he says, "Dravidian is the most important of the non-Aryan elements in the civilization of India, and the basic culture of India

is certainly over 50% Dravidian, although expressed in the main through the Aryan language."

When the Muslims broke up the South Indian feudal states and when later foreign colonial powers gradually took possession of South Indian territories, there followed the decline of all cultural life and stagnation in literary production. The period of alien domination, poverty and economic and political oppression were the main factors, preventing the free growth and flowering of Tamil literature, the oldest and richest representative of the Dravidian literatures. In the late feudal era, Tamil literary development came to a standstill : the epos decayed, mystic poetry, once aflame with a passionate devotion to God and the longing, if not to break up, at least to disregard and make light of the fetters of the caste system, withered away. Then, too, the ancient lyrical poems, whose language, content and implications were all difficult to grasp in a time of cultural eclipse, fell into forgetfulness. So it came about that the unique memorials of the oldest Tamil literature remained till recently hidden from the sight not only of literary scholars, but also from the Tamil people themselves.

In 1884 the young teacher of Tamil, as he was then, U. V. Swaminatha Aiyar, on the staff of Government College in Kumbakonam, began to read the Tamil medieval epos, *Jivakachintamani*. Fascinated by this highly ornamental and formally perfect work, he took up the search for other survivals of this classical literature ; unheeding the difficulties of strenuous journeys and of acquiring the necessary financial means, with remarkable diligence and perseverance he collected hundreds of the almost illegible manuscripts on palm leaves, separated the wheat from the chaff, till he had prepared for publication thousands of

verses, with his own commentary, and so brought to light, step by step, the oldest examples of South Indian literature. In 1894 the first edition was published of an Old Tamil anthology of lyrical poetry, *Puranaanuuru* and with it was revealed to the astounded world of specialists and Tamil cultural workers and literati an unsuspected treasure; this body of splendid, many-faceted and soaring lyrical poesy, and with it the existence of an ancient Tamil culture, a whole unknown era in the history of South India's evolution. Dr. U. V. Swaminatha Aiyar has fortunately been joined by others in his work of discovery and steady progress is being made.

European and American specialists in Indian studies, however, under the spell of the beauty and depth of thought of Sanskrit literature, had neither the time nor interest to study the ancient Tamil writings. For long they looked upon South India as tropical wilds, inhabited by barbarians, the uncultured tribes of the original inhabitants of the sub-continent. Sanskrit was considered then, on the basis of romantic views and developing racial theories, to be the 'purest', 'most original' and the oldest language of the Aryans who were destined to be the Herren-volk and kulturtrager, bringing to the autochthonous population of India the benefits of the higher Aryan civilization. It would seem, however, that the opposite was the case: the physically stronger, more energetic and aggressive Aryan conquerors of India, nomads and semi-nomads of the Central Asian steppes and of Iranian highlands, found in India a rising and even well-developed urban civilization, far in advance of their own conceptions. Today an ever growing number of researchers incline to the view that the original Dravidian inhabitants reached India from the early

cultural cradle of the Mediterranean seaboard and of Asia Minor, some time about 3,500 B. C., and that it was the people speaking the dialects of the original Dravidian tongue who, later known to the Aryans as *Dasa, Dasyu* and subsequently as *Sudra*, were the builders of an urban civilization and one of the co-builders of the great Harappan culture.

It is still one of the mysteries of Indian history how these proto-Dravidians came to South India, where even in pre-feudal times they founded the great dynastic States of the Cholas, Cheras, Pandyas and Satiyaputras. It is possible that much light could be thrown on the problem by planned and co-ordinated work on the part of archaeologists, epigraphers and historians, carrying on their investigations on the basis of the material deriving from a study of the oldest Tamil poetry.

This poetry was later published in two large collections, entitled respectively, Eight Anthologies *(Ettuttokai)* and Ten Idylls *(Pattuppaattu)*. The two collections comprise in all 2381 poems (according to the Maha Samajam edition of 1940), attributed to 473 poets (besides anonymous pieces), the length of the poems varying from concise quatrains to idylls running to 800 lines. From the eighth to the thirteenth century, these poems—undoubtedly representing only a fraction of the products of the Old Tamil poetical art—were collected in a number of anthologies, edited with commentaries and recorded on palm leaves, which in South India, took the place of parchment, paper or birch bark.

The majority of authors are today already agreed as to the dating of this lyrical poetry. Certain data in the texts themselves—the philological evidence, the confirmatory evidence of archaeological research and

the allusions in Greek and Latin authors—all these make it possible to determine the period within which this literature arose; the majority of historians agree with the so-called Gajabahu synchronism, that is the conception according to which the Ceylonese King Gajabahu I (171-193 A. D.) was a contemporary of the Chera monarch, Senguttuvan. This ruler is then mentioned by a number of authors of Old Tamil poetry where references are made to him as to a contemporary. It is thus possible with a considerable degree of certainty to date the oldest poems of this cycle to the first few centuries of our era. On the basis of detailed considerations, which we cannot go into within the limits of this article, in which philological factors play a considerable role, allusions in contemporary Antique authors, ten references to Yavanas—Greeks and Romans—in Old Tamil poetry, archaeological finds in the old Roman garrison station of Virapatnam-Arikamedu, in South India, numerous finds of Roman coins, and so on, we may conclude that the majority of poet-creators of the oldest Tamil lyrics lived between 100 and 300 B. C. These poets are represented (if we deduct from the total the obviously younger poems which have made their way into final redaction of the older cycle) by 26,350 verses composed in the *ahaval* metre, the first and oldest metrical pattern in Tamil prosody ; ahaval has no analogy in Sanskrit poetry and the nearest comparison is with English blank verse. The style, diction and metrical perfection of this poetry suggest that it must have been preceded by a period of development of at least three to five centuries.

And now a few words about the character of the period in which this poetry arose: It is certain that the majority of the poets lived at a time when

politically more consolidated forms had become established in the old tribal territories, at a time when complete ethnical, linguistic and cultural fusion had been achieved of the pre-Dravidian population of South India with the upper strata of Dravidian bearers of an urban culture, a mature peasantry and the beginnings of early feudalism, a people with a fully developed language and, most probably, also a script. The process had already considerably advanced of the division of property—the growth of private property and the rise of social classes—which led to the break-up of the primitive tribal organization. In the river valleys and in the fertile coastal plains production developed and barter on a considerable scale; large towns of different types grew up, especially important being the residence towns of the ruling sovereign and the seaport towns (Madura, Kaviripattinam, Vanji, Korkai) where a hegemony arose of the merchant class, in close association with the ruling dynasty. The members of a few notable old families gathered the economic and political power into their hands, enlarged their territories by systematic annexation of peripheral territories, thereby giving rise to a feudal state with a residence and seaport town as its centre. Despite the fact that in the more remote wooded and mountainous regions tribal divisions still existed, the Tamils already at that time had achieved nationhood, and a certain local dialect in use at the junction of trading and cultural routes, supplemented by other dialectal elements, rose to the position of the only literary Tamil language, cultivated in 'academies' (Sangams), especially in Madura. Small royal residences arose, an indispensable feature of the court, entourage being the poet-bards or *paanar*, who wandered from court to court accompanied by

musicians and dancers, in search of a patron, who would pay for his song in gold, spirits, food, clothing or confer on him his life-long favour. Not seldom the bards achieved high positions as counsellors of more or less powerful rulers, and cases are known of life-long friendships between a bard and his (or her) royal patron. A comparison at once springs to mind with West European court poesy, with which it has a number of motifs in common (dialogues between the hero and his beloved, the parting of lovers and the motif of the lying gossips (lausengiers) in Provence and of the village scandalmongers among the Tamils).

The works of these wandering minstrels and court bards, however, preserved in reminiscences and poetical images and allusions are survivals from a much earlier time. In the folk consciousness there was still alive the memory of the kinship organization of society which survived intact—for the development in South India was extremely unequal – in the time of the rise of the feudal lyric in the more inaccessible wooded and mountainous parts of the country: there tribes of possibly pre Dravidian origin were still at the stage of hunting and collecting, worshipped their tribal gods, seeking to propitiate them with bloody sacrifices and wild dancing orgies, whereas in the valleys and plains and on the seaboard the system of a hereditary monarchy had evolved, where reigning representatives built themselves brick or timber palaces and trade was carried on with the Roman Empire, muslin 'fine as smoke' was produced, where not only a complete fusion was effected between the Dravidian elements and the pre-Dravidian neolithic (Austric ?) population, (characterized by village culture and primitive farming), but whither a new element, the Aryan element, was pushing its way down from North India, with its

speculative analysis, gloomy reflections, tiring classification of entities and disintegrating pessimistic ponderings and metaphysics.

The content—the traditional and only content—of the oldest Tamil poetry are the two spheres of human activity, which the ancient Tamils designated *aham* and *puram*; aham signifies in this context domestic, private, love life; and here, actually, a tender intimate love lyric, predominantly descriptive and only rarely reflective; puram, on the other hand, signified public and political life and the life of the warrior, and is represented by war lyrics and panegyrics. Quite naturally, love and fighting, the two most striking expressions of living reality, provide the content of the oldest poesy, which has two basic characteristics realism and secularity.

Besides the basic division into these two genres, aham and puram, there existed a third classification of love poems according to the setting which the poem describes and the sub-division into the group of themes of which it treats. At first glance, it is obvious that this classification, later hardening into fixed conventions and usages, had its origin in real life; not a few poems, indeed, point to the folk song as having played an important role in their genesis. According to whether the plot of the poem in which three persons usually figure (the hero-lover, his sweetheart and the sweetheart's girl friend, or the hero, his charioteer comrade-in-arms squire, and his sweetheart, or as a third combination, the sweetheart's mother or nurse, the sweetheart and the hero) was set in the hills, in the woods or in the river-valleys, in the inland steppes or by the sea, the poems formed groups or *tinai*, and it is possible that this division reflects the historical migration of the pre-Dravidian and proto-Tamil

population from the hills and jungles to the fertile plains and to the seaboard, or, in other words, the development from the neolithic hunter, through the intermediate stage of the keeper of flocks to the settled tiller of the soil and fisherman. Each of the five *tinais* has its own fixed customs: in the life of herdsmen and their marriage customs, that of the matched by the wildness of their passion ; the poetry of the steppes tells of cruel clans of robbers and the abduction of fair maidens ; the poesy of the woods describes the life of herdsmen and their marriage customs, that of the peasant-cultivators of the land of the more advanced forms of social life in the fertile valleys, of monogamous families and the motif of conjugal faithlessness, and, finally, the poesy of the seaboard, which has as its characteristic motif the long separation of husband and wife, which was natural among a community where the men were absent for longer periods on fishing or trading expeditions.

Within this conventional framework, the poet had a certain freedom in the choice of theme and of the means for its expression. Whereas panegyrics and other poems of the *puram* type describe preparations for combat, the battlefield and the return from the wars, or sing the praises of the sovereign for his generosity, gratitude and bravery, the love poem of the *aham* type has a wider range of themes, derived from endless variations on the single theme of love. In both genres, however, the poems radiate a happy affirmation of life on earth, a natural acceptance of reality unclouded by corroding scepticism, an attitude which is summed up in this poem from the *Puranaa-nuuru* (191) collection :

"Lend me your ear, oh my man,
to the reason's plea :

Virtuous and noble is my wife ;
Wise are my children ;
Dutiful are my loyal stewards ;
Just is the sway of my ruler
who does no wrong.

And the hamlet where I dwell,
abounds in heroic men,
who are no passion's slaves.

Therefore my hair has not grown grey,
though far sunk I be in the vale of years."

—Translated by R. S. Desikan

If we look at this body of poetry as a whole, it is at once clear to us that it is art poetry which, with certain reservations, we may call court poetry and may justifiably be compared in certain of its features with the lyrical poetry of the Provencal troubadours. In other features, again, it is reminiscent of classical Chinese poetry : it is equally the product of a long development and a high level of culture, where apparent spontaneity is the outcome of a perfect mastery of the subject and of the form. S. Vaiyapuri Pillai aptly characterizes this aspect of Old Tamil lyrical poetry : Conciseness of expression, pregnancy of meaning, purity of diction and unity of thought are the main characteristics of these poems...There is art, severe and simple ; but of artificiality there is very little trace.

For us, however, this poetry is of interest most of all thanks to the two traits already stressed above : its realism and its secularism. The love scenes and their natural setting are described with an exceptional feeling for reality, for plasticity and for colour nuances, with a meticulous eye for detail, emotional intensity and a realism which is so untypical of India

that it is at once obvious that the creators of these poems were of another nation and another world than the authors of the classical epics and lyrics of Sanskrit. This Tamil lyric poetry is pre-eminently of this world, neither knows nor recognises religious inspiration, makes no allusion to supernatural intervention, deals with man alone and with his life on earth; only exceptionally does it reflect religious conceptions (and then, only the rites and ceremonies of more or less primitive cults) and very rarely is it of a reflective or speculative character, but where it does appear it is of a very different quality from what we find in Sanskrit literature. For the most part, this poetry describes, colourfully, splendidly, with enthusiasm and elan, occasionally with that strikingly forceful exaggeration, humour and emotion, which is peculiar to South Indian expression in all domains of art. The colourfulness of the description, the poet's emotional engagement, the elemental realism and, above all, the intimate and vital kinship with nature, the interweaving of pictures and comparisons from the life of animals and plants with pictures from human life—these are the qualities which endear this poetry to us despite the distance of space and time.

In respect of form, this poetry is remarkably mature, though the *ahaval* metre does not admit of artificiality and a toying with form; this rhythmic prose is associated with numerous alliterations and assonances, and in the finest poems of such outstanding poets as Kabilar or Paranar the verses actually rumble and roar where they describe the storming elements, and trip and chatter and bubble where they sing of a mountain stream. But the poet's individuality seldom comes into the foreground. The majority of poems, though naturally varying in quality, are anonymous in

content and style and altogether homogeneous. Themes, poetic conventions, vocabulary, the phase of linguistic development (the latter least of all) together form a unified block of creative output, of a single period of social, cultural and literary development, which could not exceed some 150 to 200 years.

The discovery of this body of roughly two thousand three hundred verses raised the Tamil language at one stroke from an insignificant neo-Indian language to the standing of one of the great classical languages of the world. Whoever has made a more intimate acquaintance with this ancient poesy will readily subscribe to the assessment of the French indologist, Pierre Meile, when he states that this poetry is comparable with the choicest gems of old Greek lyrical poetry, and that this 'cycle of Sangam poetry represents one of the summits of literary creation in India and in the whole world'. And not only that: the Old Tamil lyric is a living fount of inspiration for modern Tamil poetry not excluding that of a poet of the stature of S. Bharati; several present-day poets, foremost among whom is the highly talented Bharatidasan, draw directly upon it and consciously link up with it in their work. Thus this poetry of two milleniums ago is still alive and we cannot but hope that it will find enthusiastic, skilled and devoted interpreters, who will convey something of its beauty and riches to readers in all the main world languages.

—From NEW ORIENT, bi-monthly, 5, 1960, page 3.

Vedanayagam Pillai

FRANCIS MARAIS

The Madras Writers' Association met on July 21, 1959 at the Srinivasa Sastry Hall, Madras, to celebrate the seventieth anniversary of the death of Vedanayagam Pillai and the centenary of the publication of his *Needhi nool*. Dr. A Krishnaswamy, M. P., who presided, paid a glowing tribute to the contribution of the poet in the field of Tamil literature and service. Prof. M. Rathnaswamy, unveiling a portrait of the poet, called him the 'Father of modern Tamil prose.' Mr. K. V. Jegannathan of '*Kalaimagal*' characterized the poet's literary works as a 'human document throbbing with life.' Prof. P. Sambamoorthy pointed out the significant contribution that Vedanayagam Pillai had made to Carnatic music. At long last, the Tamil world seemed to have awakened to the inestimable and life-long service of love rendered to her by one of her great sons.

Vedanayagam Pillai was born in 1826 to Savarimuthu Pillai and Arokiamariammal of Vellala community—descendants of the Kongu Rayars who had served under the Kongu Princes—in Kulathur, a place known even in Sangam Literature, some ten miles from Tiruchirapalli. His forefathers originally professing Saivism had become converts to Christianity two generations earlier. Till ten years of age Vedanayagam went to the local village school, and then a desire for the knowledge of English (at that time a passport to life) made him leave for Tiruchirapalli and place himself there under one Thyaga Pillai, a court translator and a friend of his father. Here he laid the founda-

tion of his solid knowledge of English and Tamil, and his practical gift was already in evidence. After some ten years as a pupil under Thyaga Pillai, Vedanayagam now 22 years old, entered service in 1848 as a record-keeper in the Tiruchirapalli District Court and became two years later the court translator. It was his duty to send English translations of the court proceedings to the Suddar Court. As some translations of the local court proceedings did not reach the Suddar Court, through no fault of Vedanayagam Pillai, he was dismissed from his work by the District Court judge Mr. Greenway. Vedanayagam Pillai appealed against that decision. Sometime later the missing records were found in a trunk of Mr. Davidson, the previous judge, and the Suddar Court ordered the reinstatement of Vedanayagam Pillai.

About 1856 the post of District Munsiff in Tranquebar became vacant, and Vedanayagam Pillai was one of the three successful applicants for it. He was appointed to the office in 1857, and after a short period in Tranquebar he was transferred to Sirkali and later to Mayuram. He remained in Mayuram till he retired with a pension in 1872 owing to a misunderstanding with one Mr. Nelson, the District Court judge there.

After his retirement Vedanayagam Pillai served for some years as the Municipal Chairman in Mayuram. If his retirement from Government service was a loss to the public, it was a gain to Tamil literature. His *Needhi nool* had already appeared in 1859, and his advice to women 'பெண்மதி மாலை' and the two essays on the same theme in 1869 while he was still in service as a judge. But most of his poetical works and his two ventures in fiction belong to this period of retirement. The year 1873 saw the publication of four short poems,

திருவருள் மாலை, திருவருள் அந்தாதி, தேவமாதா அந்தாதி, பெரிய நாயகி அம்மன் அந்தாதி. His சர்வ சமய சமரசக் கீர்த்தனைகள், very popular to this day, was published in 1878. Some ten years later, in 1889, appeared two collections of Catholic songs தேவதோத்திர மாலை and சத்திய வேத கீர்த்தனைகள். That year saw also the demise of Vedanayagam Pillai.

Tamil prose, which began with the early commentators, found its feet only in the nineteenth century. Christian missionaries had used it earlier, and writers like De Nobili and Beschi had given a great impetus to the formation of a Tamil prose literature. Perhaps the first literary work in Tamil prose is Beschi's '*Paramartha Guru*', a satire on ignorant priesthood. With the appearance of *Panchathanthra Kathai* in the middle of the nineteenth century modern Tamil prose may be said to have definitely begun. But till the beginning of the twentieth century production in Tamil literary prose was intermittent. Vedanayagam Pillai's two works of fiction, *Prathapa Mudaliar* and *Suguna Sundary*, and his essays on women's education, form a considerable proportion of this meagre output.

Prathapa Mudaliar has the distinction of being the first work in Tamil of a new genre. Both *Prathapa Mudaliar* (1876) and *Suguna Sundary* (1877) when judged by modern standards of fiction, read more like prose epics than novels. Innumerable sub-plots, speeches and coincidences, but loosely connected with the main story, may detract from their value as novels, in comparison with close-knit modern fiction. And the characters have been delineated more with an eye to an ideal to be presented than from actual life. 'I have represented the principal personages as perfectly virtuous,' writes the author in his introduction to *Prathapa Mudaliar*.

But for all their idealism the characters are not devoid of life, and the background remains, with all its improbabilities, essentially the Tamil land of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Besides, Vedanayagam Pillai wrote these works of fiction with a purpose in view to point out the defects and shortcomings of our social and political life, and seized all occasions to preach his reforms. Indeed, through all his writings in prose or verse runs the zeal of the social missionary. And above all, the language, rich and flowing like a broad stream, possesses the essential qualities of a literary style and remains to this day a model of literary prose.

In *Prathapa Mudaliar* and *Sugunasundary* the heroines seize every occasion to speak on the social evils of the day. There are quite a few sermonettes on topics ranging from the principles of personal hygiene to personal and social virtues. His advice to pleaders is a regular treatise on the administration of justice. He condemns in the strongest terms bribery and corruption. In telling and memorable verse he exposes, often with much humour, the corrupt practices prevalent in the profession. His plea for the use of Tamil at the levels will find echoes in the heart of every lover of Tamil.

அண்டப் புரட்டன்அந்த வாதி—அகி
லாண்டப் புரட்டன்அப்பா அவன்பிரதி வாதி
சண்டப்ர சண்டன்நியாய வாதி—நாளும்
சாத்திரப் புளுகன்சாட்சிக் காரனெனும் கியாதி.

This on accepting bribes :

சம்பள மிருக்கப்பின் மேல்வரு மானம்
தனைநாடி ஏன்அதன் மேல்நித்ய தியானம்?
அம்புவி மிசைவிளைந் திடும்அவ மானம்,
அதைவிட எடுக்கலா மேஉபா தானம்!

Perhaps his best efforts in prose and verse in the sphere of social reform were devoted to the promotion of the education of women. He devoted a whole book to advocate with every possible argument, the education of girls and touched upon the subject frequently in his songs and two novels. In very telling stanzas he makes his point :

எழுத்துவா சகமறி யாதவள் மட்டி;
ஏது மறியாதவள் சுரண்டுவாள் சட்டி;
கழுத்திலே அவளுக்குத் தாலியைக் கட்டிக்
காரிய மிலைஅது காசுக்கு நட்டி.

He ends his ' Advice to women ' with two songs in which women plead with men the cause of their education :

வித்தையில் லாப்புரு டன்செய்கை பாரும்—அந்த
விதமல்ல வோபடை யாமட வாரும்?
உத்தமி யையயே விரும்புவீர் நீரும்—கல்வி
உளராவிட் டாற்குண மெப்படிச் சேரும்?

காலைக்கு மாலைக்கு மூலைக்குள் எங்களை
ஆலைக் கரும்புபோல் தேய்த்தீர்—பாக
சாலைக்கும் மன்மத லீலைக்கும் மேவின
வேலைக்கும் எங்களை மாயத்தீர்;
மூலைக்கல் விநங்கள் வாசித்தால் ஆபத்தோ?
மூடப்பெண் கொள்வீ ருமக்குப் பெரும்பித்தோ?
ஓலைக் கிரந்தங்க ளுங்கள்பாட் டன்சொத்தோ?
உமக்கென்ன காணும் தலைமேற் றலைபத்தோ?

A word may be added on Vedanayagam Pillai's contribution to Carnatic music. Prof. Arunchala Gounder deals with the question at some length in his life of the poet (pp. 102-111). Vadanayagam Pillai was not, it is true, a great creative musician like Thyagaraja Aiyar or Muthusamy Dikshitar. His main credit is that he helped to popularize the use of Tamil in musical compositions. Carnatic music had witnessed great creative activity in the early decades of the century, but the Tamil language had little or no place

in it. Vedanayagam Pillai made good this shortcoming. In his compositions, words and music fuse into one, as he was both a poet and a musician, and his words as well as his music are inspired, or rather they form part of the same inspiration and complete each other. The great popularity of his song even today attests to his greatness as real musician.

As a poet Vedanayagam Pillai may not reach the same stature as Subramanya Barathi. It was not given to him to voice the hopes and longings of a new age, for that age was not yet born. But he was a forerunner of the modern Tamil renaissance, and a new accent is already heard in his poetry unmistakably though but occasionally. There is an easy flow in his verses though he may not be so prolific as his contemporary and friend, Mahavidwan Minakshi Sundaram Pillai. He keeps in the main to the traditions of the past. The *Needhi nool*, his highest poetical achievement, maintains the traditional metres, language and imagery. But he handles them with great ease and mastery, and makes them in his social poems a vehicle of new ideas.

To understand the importance of Vedanayagam Pillai we must take ourselves back to the last decades of the nineteenth century. The picture of the Tamil country of those years has been marvellously portrayed for us in the writings of Dr. Swaminatha Aiyar, in his autobiography, biographies and essays. It was a period of sowing, not of harvesting, and what the writers of that day sowed in tears we reap today in joy. They moved in a twilight atmosphere—Dr. Swaminatha Aiyar rescuing the treasures of the past, Pandit Savariraya Pillai laying the foundation for a critical approach to literature, Prof. Sundaram Pillai and Pandit Suryanarayana Sastry making new ventures in

the field of dramatic and lyric poetry. But more than any one else, Vedanayagam Pillai tried to break through the crust of slavish tradition that lay thick upon literary efforts, and to regain for the people creative vision. The difficulties in his way were almost insurmountable. The new forces in the country were still amorphous and did not have as yet much point and drive. For that we had to wait for nearly a century more.

But as a creative artist Vedanayagam Pillai saw far ahead into the future and prepared for it by his patient, devoted, self-less spade work. And that future did not betray him. The flowering of Tamil literature in the second quarter of the present century is the fulfilment of that promise. Barathi's national lyrics and Thiru-Vi-Ka's prose-poems, Kalki's masterly story-telling, and Puthumaippiththan's short-story technique are but the fulfilment, and we have every reason to be proud of them. But while rejoicing in the fulfilment, we may not forget those who bore the heat and burden of the day, the handful of stout-hearted labourers who toiled in the face of indifference, opposition and hardship. To them belongs the credit and glory of working for the new harvest, and to Vedanayagam Pillai falls, perhaps the largest share.

Among the nineteenth century prose writers Vedanayagam Pillai easily takes the front rank. His language remains, within certain limits, at once clear, idiomatic and musical. It has not perhaps the verve of some modern writers, but in his time the forces in operation now were not awake, or, at any rate were not in full operation. He was one of the pioneers in this field, and kept to the main aim of prose — a clear communication of one's ideas. He did employ a learned style, and his deep knowledge of Tamil

classics enabled him to maintain a high level. His is a clear, direct and forcible style. Perhaps, too, his style may be found fault with as intermingled with Sanskrit words. But as Mr. A. V. Subramanya Aiyar points out in his '*Modern Tamil Literature*' (p. 121), his use of Sanskrit words is appropriate, beautiful and moderate. Prof. K. Arunachala Gounder discusses the whole question in the introduction (p. iv) to his life '*Vedanayagam Pillai*.' He concludes his discussion with the words : "A progressive community requires a language which expresses all the changes and growths in its ideas. And our writer fulfilled just this need."

Mr. A. V. Subramanya Aiyar remarks in his '*Modern Tamil Literature*' that, though Vedanayagam Pillai has written some poetry, his lasting fame in Tamil literature will be only that of a prose-writer. This is too categorical a statement to be admitted. Vedanayagam Pillai's moral verses and dovotional songs are as popular as his works of fiction, and may lay claim to a lasting reputation as much as his prose works.

Vedanayagam Pillai's poetical works are considerable and fall easily into three distinct groups—moral, social and devotional. His first poetic effort was *Needhi nool*, a work of some 400 stanzas, published in 1859 while its author was still at Sirkali. The next year when he had been transferred to Mayuram, it appeared in a second edition enlarged by an additional 200 stanzas. A decade later was published *Penmathi-malai* in 170 distichs, and the four songs on a good wife and women's education. The year 1873 saw the publication of four short works - all devotional poetry and on Christian themes—*Thiruvarul malai*, *Thiru-varul anthathi*, *Thevamatha anthathi* and *Peria nayaki*

amman Anthathi. His *Sarva samaya Samarasa Kirthanaigal* was published in 1873 and still remains his most popular work. Its counterpart *Sathyavedha Kirthanaigal* came out in 1889, the year of his death.

In his *Needhi nool*, Vedanayagam Pillai deals with the moral principles that should guide a man throughout his life. As all human morality is based on man's responsibility to a Creator, the poet devotes the first two chapters to proving God's existence and enlarging upon his attributes. Some very beautiful stanzas are to be found in this section. To prove God's existence and explain His infinite qualities many and varied proofs and similes are pressed into service—much of them traditional, some original.

தீட்டுவோ னின்றி யாமோ சித்திரம்? திகழ்பொற் பாவை
ஆட்டுவோ னின்றித் தானே யாடுமோ? திவவி யாழின்
மீட்டுவோ னின்றிக் கீதம் விளையுமோ? சராச ரங்கள்
நாட்டுவோன் ஒருவ னின்றி நன்கமைந் தொழுகுங் கொல்லோ?

And this on God's omnipresence:

தரையெலா முளன்,து ரும்பு தன்னினும் உளன்,அண் டாண்ட
நிரையெலா முளன்,மெய் யாவி நெஞ்சுளும் உளன்,இ யம்பும்
உரையெலா முளன்,தான் மேவி யுறைபொருள் கெடக்கெ டாதான்
புரைதபு தன்னைத் தானே பொருவுவோன் ஒருவ னன்றே?

The poet deals with every phase of human life—rulers and subjects, teachers and students, parents and children, husband and wife, virtues and vices—and his verses here are singularly graceful and rich in wisdom. The following stanzas on the right attitude of a king towards his subjects recall to us some well-known poems in *Purananuru* (Puram. 186 and 55)

மன்னுயி ரனைத்தும் தன்னுயி ரென்ன
மகிழ்வொடு தாங்கி,யா ரேனும்,
'இன்னலுற் றயர்ந்தோம்' எனக்கலுழ்ந் திடில்தன்
இருவிழி நீரினை உகுப்பான்,

அன்னவெந் துயரை நீக்குமுன் தானென்
 றயின்றிடான், துயின்றிடான், எவரும்
நன்னக ரெங்கும் உளனெனப் பகர
 நாடொறும் இயங்குவன் கோனே.

மன்னவன் வலிசெங் கோலினா லன்றி
 வாளினாற் சேனையா லில்லை;
நன்னெறி வழுவா மன்னவன் றனக்கு
 நாடெலாம் பேரரண்; உலகின்
மன்னுயி ரெல்லா மவன்படை; அன்னோர்
 மனமெலா மவனுறை பீடம்;
இன்னதன் மையனா யரசளிப் பவனை
 இகல்செயுந் தெறுநரு முளரோ?

He describes in beautiful language the reasons for the love and obedience that a child owes to its parents, and the intimacy that should exist between a husband and his wife:

சின்னவோர் பொருள்தந் தோரைச் சீவனுள் ளவு முள்ளத்
துன்னவே வேண்டு மென்ன உரைத்தனர் பெரியோர்; தேகந்
தன்னையா ருயிரைச் சீரார் தரணியின் வாழ்வைத் தந்த
அன்னைதந் தையர்க்குச் செய்யும் அருங்கைம்மா றுளதோ அம்மா!

அன்பருண்ணில் என்பசிபோம்; அவர்களிக்க யான்களிப்பேன்;
துன்பமவ ருறில்யானுந் துன்புறுவேன்; ஆதலினால்
என்புடல்வே றெனினும்எமக் கின்னுயிரொன் றெனவறிந்தேன்;
பின்பவர்தாம் என்னைவிட்டுப் பிரிவதெவ்வா றுரைசகியே!

And this in praise of charity:

அணியிலார்க் கணியாம்; வாய்ந்த அழகிலார்க் கழகாம்; நீண்ட
பிணியினார்க் கெக்க ளிப்பாம்; பேறிலார்க் கன்ன தாம்; உள்
துணிவிலார்க் குணர்வெல் லாமாம்; துப்பிலார்க் கொப்பில்
 துப்பாம்;
தணிவில்பாக் கியங்க ளெல்லாம் தருமமல் லதுவே றுண்டோ?

Vedanayagam Pillai was an ardent social reformer. Living in the second half of the nineteenth century, he saw the need of social reform in all its phases, if the Tamil community was to be raised. Like Barathi, of a later date, he shed tears on the social shortcomings of his people, their ignorance and superstition, disunion and cowardice.

All his writings in prose and verse had this one purpose in view—the social uplift of his people. As a foundation for their social character, he inculcates upon them moral virtues. In his introduction to *Prathapa Mudaliar* he writes: "I have inculcated piety towards God, and pointed out ***religious and social*** duties of life. I have endeavoured to exhibit the inherent beauty of virtue and to expose the deformity of vice in such a way as to create the love of the one and a detestation of the other."

Manimekalai

S. J. GUNASEGARAM

Manimekalai is the heroine of the Buddhist Classic in Tamil entitled '*Manimekalai*' - the only epic of the type in the whole range of Buddhist literature. It is the compostion of a Tamil Buddhist merchant known as Sattanar. The consensus of opinion among Tamil scholars is that the work belongs to the second century, the period following the Sangam classics.

The author was a friend of Ilanko (the young Prince), a younger brother of Senguttuvan, the king associated with the dedication of the temple to Pattini, or Kannakai (Kannaki)—the chaste. Ilanko was the illustrious author of *Silappathikaram* (The Epic of the Anklet), and these two Tamil classics have often been referred to as 'Twin Epics'.

C. R. Reddy in his foreword to '*Dravidian India*,' by T. R. Sesha Iyengar, calls Manimekalai a 'supreme pearl of Dravidian poesy'.[1] 'The investigation and enquiry into Tamil literary tradition' says Krishnaswami Iyengar, 'leads to the conclusion that it is a work of classic excellence in Tamil literature and may be regarded as a Sangam work in that sense.'[2]

The same scholar refers to it as a 'Tamil Treatise on Buddhist Logic'. Prof. S. Vaiyapuri Pillai refers to it as 'this great classic'.[3] M D. Raghavan ('*Times of Ceylon*', 1-5-58), writing on the contribution of

1. '*Dravidian India*,' by Sesha Iyengar, Luzac & Co., London.
2. '*Manimekalai in its Historical Setting*,' by Krishnaswami Iyangar, Preface. p. VII.
3. '*History of Tamil Language and Literature*', by S. Vaiyapuri Pillai, p. 155.

Tamils to the religious system of the Island (Ceylon) says, "It will always remain a sense of pride to us that the greatest if not the only classical epic of Theravada Buddhism exists in the Tamil language. The poetry of Manimekalai (2nd century A. D) remains one of the finest jewels of Tamil poetry."

In contrast Sinhalese writers of recent times, either because their knowledge of Tamil literature is scanty or because they have failed to note the opinions of scholars who rank it high among the Tamil classics, refer to it merely as a 'poem'. Dr. Malalasekera alludes to the conflict between the Naga kings found in the 'Tamil poem Manimekalai', mentioned in the *Mahavamsa* (6th century).[1]

While the *Mahavamsa* places the scene of the battle at Nagadipa,[2] the earlier chronicle, '*The Dipavamsa*' (4th C.), says, that the battle was fought in Tambapanni,[3] ie., the North of Ceylon. The Manimekalai gives the name of the scene as Manipallavam, identified by Rajanayagam Mudaliar as North Ceylon.[4]

Dr. Paranavitane refers to Manimekalai as 'a Tamil poem, a work attributed to the second century of the Christian era', and adds that the goddess Manimekalai after whom the heroine of the work is named seems to have been a patron saint of the sea faring people of the Tamil land who professed the Buddhist faith. The same writer refers to a non-canonical Pali work which "contains a very old legend of South Indian origin. The work states that one of the six stupas had been built by Tamil merchants."[5]

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1. '*Vamsattha Pakkasini*', Commentary on the *Mahavamsa*, by Dr. G.P. Malalasekera, Vol. 1. Int. p. LXXVI.
2. *Mahavamsa*, Ch. 1, V, 47.
3. *Dipavamsa*, Ch. ii, V. 3.
4. '*Ancient Jaffna*', p. 26.
5. *C. L. R.*, Vol, 1. No. 1. Jan; 1931.

Dr. Paranavitane quotes *Rajavalia* (which he calls 'a Sinhalese historical work of the (17th C.) where we are told that she would be mother of Duttugemunu ('Vihara-Devi' now 'Vihara Maha-Devi'), who had been offered by her father as a sacrifice to appease the sea-gods, was brought by the goddess Manimekalai across the sea to Magama, where she found her future husband. What Dr. Paranavitane describes as 'a Sinhalese historical work', Prof. Vaiyapuri Pillai says, 'is not of any historical value and cannot be relied upon'.[1] Dr. Mendis in his early history of Ceylon has expressed a similar opinion.[2]

Two facts however, emerge from these references. The tradition accepted in Ceylon that the goddess Manimekalai was the patron saint of early Tamil merchants, points to a very early period in the history of Ceylon during which Tamil Buddhist influence had reached the Island.

The *Dipavamsa* (4th C.) and the *Mahavamsa* (6th C.), the Pali Buddhist Chronicles of Ceylon, refer to the conflict between two Naga Princes of North Ceylon for the ownership of the Island. The quarrel is said to have been settled by Buddha himself. The two references, though there are differences in detail, are found in the *Manimekalai*. It is unlikely that the Tamil author of *Manimekalai* could have had access to the Pali Chronicles of Ceylon composed and preserved in some remote Vihara in the Island. Unless and until an earlier common source for the story could be cited, the *Manimekalai* should be assigned to a date earlier than that of the *Mahavamsa* and the *Dipavamsa*.

1. Vaiyapuri Pillai, ibid, n. p. 144.
2. *'The Early History of Ceylon'*. Dr. G. C. Mendis, 1954 Edition, p. 25.

The consensus of opinion among students of Tamil literature has been that classic *Manimekalai* belongs to the 2nd century A. D., though not a Sangam work. Prof. Vaiyapuri Pillai, a fellow worker with K. A. Nilakanta Sastri, (a distinguished historian and South Indian Sankritist who has striven to establish the priority and supremacy of Sanskrit literary influences in the South), has challenged the date attributed to *Manimekalai* and post dates it. He adduces a number of arguments to show that the *Manimekalai* and the connected classic *Silappathikaram* are assignable to the 8th century, but accepts that the former was an earlier composition."[1]

As already indicated below, Prof. Vaiyapuri Pillai rejects the tradition recorded in the Sinhalese Chronicle *Rajavalia.* Although unreliable and comparatively recent, the *Rajavali* records a persistent tradition in Ceylon regarding the introduction of Pattini (Kannaki) worship to Ceylon by Gajabahu I, in the 2nd century A. D. There is clear mention in the *Silappathikaram* that Gajabahu was present at the dedication of the temple to Pattini by Cheran Senguttuvan.[2] That Cheran Senguttuvan was an eminent king of the Sangam age is well known.

Prof. Vaiyapuri Pillai holds that the most important statement from a historical standpoint that Gajabahu of Ceylon was present at Senguttuvan's court stands singularly uncorroborated. He admits however that *Manimekalai* corroborates the statement in the *Silappathikaram* that it was at Senguttuvan's capital, the consecration of Kannaki's temple took place; but doubts that Gajabahu was present at the ceremony because the *Manimekalai* does not mention Gajabahu.

1. Vaiyapuri Pillai, ibid. pp. 139 - 155
2. *Culuvamsa* I, Int. p, V.

Neither *Manimekalai* nor *Silappathikaram* is a historical work. The poet chooses incidents that are relevent to his thesis. That the author of the *Manimekalai* has failed to corroborate its 'twin epic' about the presence of Gajabahu I of Ceylon at Senguttuvan's Court does not prove Prof. Vaiyapuri Pillai's case, although such corroboration would have been helpful. But it has been pointed out that both the works agree that the consecration was at the capital of Cheran Senguttuvan who is known to have ruled in the 2nd century A. D.

Again that Paranar, one of the illustrious poets of the Tamil Sangam age, has failed to mention in his poem on Sengattuvan anything about the installation of Kannaki as deity or about Ilanko being Senguttuvan's brother or about Gajabahu—should not be taken as a serious argument to support the Professor's case. Not all the works of Paranar and of the Sangam age have come down to us. It depends, moreover, what religious views Paranar held for him to consider the dedication of the temple of Kannagi as an important event. Ilanko (which merely means the young Prince) himself might have been too young to have merited notice by Paranar. It is admitted that both *Manimekalai* and Ilanko's works are post Sangam classics.

The Professor's most unconvincing of all arguments from silence is his emphasis on the fact that the *Mahavamsa* has failed to state anything about Gajabahu's attendance at the consecration ceremony, at the Chola capital or of the introduction of Pattini (Kannagi) worship to Ceylon.

Of the *Mahavamsa* it has been pointed out that "not what is said but what is unsaid is its besetting difficulty." One does not expect a monkish chroniclar bent on 'the edification of the pious' Buddhists to refer

to an illustriou's king of Anuradhapura introducing a Hindu Cult. It is well known that Gajabahu I, if not a Hindu, was without doubt a king with Hindu leanings. This probably accounts for the scant attention paid to the reign of this king in the pious Buddhist romance.

The fact appears to be that Prof. Vaiyapuri Pillai finds support in the statement made by the Prof. Jacobi, is to the effect the logic of *Manimekalai* is more or less a copy of *Nyayapravesa* of Dignaga attributed to the 4th centuy A. D.

Prof. Vaiyapuri Pillai in a note to his appendix in the *History of Tamil language and literature*, p. 189, says:

" It is well known that the author of the *Manimekalai* is indebted for this section to Dignaga's *Nyayapravesa*...... Professor Jacobi renders it very probable that Dignaga perhaps even Dharmakirti, was known to this classic in Tamil."

Prof. Vayapuri Pillai seems to have ignored the fact that long ago Dr. S. Krishnaswamy Iyangar, a recognised authority on the *Manimekalai*, had convincingly rebutted Prof. Jacobi's assumption that the Buddhist logic of *Manimekalai* is derived from that of Dignaga's *Nyayapravesa*. He has stated in clear terms that, 'We have good reason for regarding *Manimekalai* as a work anterior to Dignaga'.[1]

Discussing the "clear cut, succint statement, found in the *Manimekalai* of the main Buddhist theory of the '*The four truths*', '*The twelve Nidanas*', and the means of getting to the correct knowledge, which ultimately would put an end to 'Being'. Dr. S. Krishnasamy

1. Krishnasamy Iyangar, ibid, Int. p. XXVIII.

Iyangar says, "There is nothing that may be regarded as referring to any form of Mahayana Buddhism, particularly the Sunyavada as formulated by Nagarjuna. One way of interpreting this silence would be that Nagarjuna's teaching as such of the Sunyavada had not yet travelled to the Tamil country to be mentioned in connection with the orthodox teaching of Buddhism or to be condemned as orthodox." [1]

Again Iyangar points out that in Chapter XXX of *Manimekalai* 'the soul referred seems clearly to be to the individual soul and not to the universal soul'. He adds, 'These points support the view to that which we were led in our study of the previous book, and thus make the work clear one of a date anterior to Dignaga and not posterior."[2]

Dr. S. Krishnasamy Iyangar clinches his argument by reference to the Chola rule at Kanchi. "Kanchi is referred to as under the rule of the Cholas yet, and the person actually mentioned as holding rule at the time was the younger brother of the Chola ruler for the time being. Against this Viceroyalty an invasion was undertaken by the united armies of the Cheras and the Pandyas which left the Chera capital Vanji impelled by earth hunger and nothing else, and attacked the Viceroyalty. The united armies were defeated by the princely viceroy of the Cholas who presented to the elder brother, the monarch, as spoils of war, the umbrellas that he captured on the field of battle. This specific historical incident which is described with all the precision of a historical statement in the work must decide the question along with the other historical matter, to which we have already adverted. No princely viceroy of the Chola was possible in Kanchi after A. D. 300, from which period we have a

1, 2. Ibid. Int. pp. XXVIII - XXIX.

continuous succession of Pallava rulers holding sway in the region. Once the Pallavas had established their position in Kanchi, their neighbours in the west and the north had become others than the Cheras. From comparatively early times, certainly during the 5th century, the immediate neighbours to the west were the Gangas, and little farther to the west by north were the Kadambas, over both of whom the Pallavas claimed suzerainty readily recognized by the other parties. This position is not reflected in the *Manimekalai* or *Silappathikaram.* Whereas that which we find actually and definitely stated is very much more a reflection of what is derivable from purely Sangam literature so called. This general position together with the specific datum of the contemporaneity of the authors to Senguttuvan Chera must have the decisive force. Other grounds leading to a similar conclusion will be found in our other works, '*The Augustan Age of Tamil Literature*' (*Ancient India,* chapter xiv), '*The Beginnings of South Indian History*', and, '*The Contributions of South India to Indian Culture*'. The age of the Sangam must be anterior to that of the Pallavas and the age of the *Manimekalai* and *Silappathikaram,* if not actually referable as the works of the Sangam as such, certainly is referable to the period in the course of the activity of the Sangam".[1]

The *Manimekalai* is an exposition of Hinayāna Buddhism. Hinayana as distinct from Mahàyàna, is a Southern school—an earlier school—of Buddhism than Mahàyàna.

The Ceylon tradition that Buddhaghosa, in the 5th century, had to come over to the Island from the Tamil country in South India to write the commentaries on the earlier Pali texts on Hinayàna into pure Magadhi is

1. Ibid. Int. pp. XXVIII - XXIX.

an indication that in the 5th century itself Mahàyàna had become dominant in South India. This tendency finds further support in the Introduction of a form of Mahàyànist teaching into Ceylon (the doctrine referred as the Vaituliyan heresy) in the previous century, by the Chola monk Sanghamitta, the friend of Mahàsena king of Anuradhapura.[1]

Moreover the reference in Manimekalai to the popularity of Buddhism in Javakam indicates that *Manimekalai* had been written long before Mahàyānism became the dominant form of Buddhism under the Sailendra Empire, in islands such as Java and Sumatra.

Sir R. Winstedt attests to the fact that the Buddhist story of *Manimekalai* left by the Tamil merchants Sumatran folklore had been retold in the Malay Peninsula and written down in modern times.[2]

Again it has been shown that the earlier Sangam works as well as *Manimekalai* and *Silappathikaram* make no references to the Pallavas who ruled at Kanchi from 325 A.D.[3] But all the references in the *Manimekalai* are to the earlier Chola kings such as Nalankilli and Ilankilli. Prof. Vaiyapuri Pillai apparently ignores these evidences.

Note

For a full discussion of the question of the date of *Manimekalai*, reference to Prof. Vaiyapuri Pillai's '*History of Tamil literature*', p. 142, may be made. His arguments to give it a comparatively late date had been met by Dr. S. Krishnaswamy Iyangar in his introduction to his '*Manimekalai in its Historical*

1. MHV. CH. XXXVII, V. V. 2-5.
2. '*Malaya - A Cultural History*', by Sir Richard Winstedt, p. 139.
3. '*Buddhism and Tamil*', ibid, p. 200.

Setting', published by the South India Saiva Siddhanta Publishing Society, Madras.

The Influence of *Manimekalai* and *Silappathikaram* on Sinhalese Literature:

Reference may be made to Dr. Godakumbura's '*Sinhalese Literature*', pages 279-288, to form some idea of the Tamil literary and religious sources which had inspired Sinhalese literature after the dethronement of Pali as the vehicle of expression of foreign Buddhist monks.

Dr. Godakumbura remarks that 'after the 16th century, when few could read the *Dharma* in its original Pali or even comprehend the compendiums written in Sinhalese', Vanijasuriya wrote the *Devadath Kathaya* in Sinhalese verse.

Commenting on the very great popularity of the story of Pattini in Sinhalese villages, Dr. Godakumbura writes :

"Literature, dealing with Pattini and the origin of the worship, is very large, and most of it has come from Tamil sources. The *Silappathikaram* and *Manimekalai* are the two main classics dealing with the story of Kannaki and Kovalan........

"It is quite possible that some popular poems existed in Tamil and these and not the classics were the sources of the numerous ballads about the Goddess".

Dr. Godakumbura also tells us that *Vyanthamala* by Tisimahla, 'gives a brief description of the Chola king in the classical style and that the author's description of the dancing of Madavi (the mother of Manimekalai), 'is one of the finest in the whole field of Sinhalese poetry.'

(Pattini—Kannaki—the heroine of *Silappathikaram* was the wife of Kovalan and Madavi was Kovalan's lover. Manimekalai, the heroine of '*Manimekalai*', was the daughter of Madavi by Kovalan)

Dr. Godakumbura then gives a fairly comprehensive list of Sinhalese writings based on the story of *Silappathikaram* and of deities popular among the Tamils—deities such as the God of Kataragama (Murugan), Ganesha, the brother of Murugan, and Vishnu—all attributed to stories from Tamil sources.

காவிரியின் கரையில் இலக்கியம்

எம். பழனி

இலக்கியம் என்பது இலக்கு என்பதன் அடியாகப் பிறந்ததாகும். அம்பு எய்வோன் ஓர் இலக்கு அமைத்துக் கொண்டு அம்பினை எய்தல் போல, நூல் செய்பவரும் ஒரு கருத்தினை இலக்காக அமைத்துக்கொண்டு நூலினைச் செய்தலின், நூல் இலக்கியம் எனப்பட்டது. நூலில் அமையும் கருத்தும் மக்கள் வாழ்க்கையைச் செம்மைப்படுத்துவதாக அமைவது மட்டும் போதாது. அக்கருத்துச் சொற்சுவை பொருட்சுவை நிரம்பியதாக இருத்தலோடு மக்கள் உள்ளத்தில் என்றும் நிலை பெறுவதாகவும் இருத்தல் வேண்டும். சங்க காலத்தில் தோன்றிய பாடல்களும், திருக்குறள், சிலப்பதிகாரம், மணிமேகலை, தேவாரம், திருவாசகம், இராமாயணம், பெரிய புராணம் முதலியனவும் சிறந்த இலக்கியத்திற்குரிய பண்புகள் அமையப் பெற்றிருக்கின்றமையின், மக்கள் உள்ளத்தில் இன்றும் நிலை பெற்றிருக்கின்றன. இலக்கியம் படிப்பதற்கு மட்டும் சுவையாக இருந்தால் அது மக்களுக்கு முழுப் பயனையுந் தாராது. படிக்கும் போது உண்டாகும் மகிழ்ச்சிதான் அதனாலடையும் பயனாகும். ஆதலின், இலக்கியம் மக்கள் வாழ்க்கைக்கு வழி காட்டியாக அமைய வேண்டும். அத்தகைய நூல்களே சிறந்த இலக்கியங்களாக மக்களால் மதிக்கப்படும்.

மக்கள் வாழ்க்கைக்கு எவையெவை இன்பமும் பயனும் தருகின்றனவோ, அவற்றிலெல்லாம் மக்கள் உள்ளம் ஈடுபடுகிறது. ஆதலின், சிறந்த இலக்கியம் இயற்றுபவர்களும் மக்கள் மனநிலையை உணர்ந்து அதற்கேற்பக் கருத்துக்களை அமைக்கின்றார்கள்.

'மக்களுக்குப் பயன்படக்கூடிய கருத்துக்களைத் தொகுத்துத் தரும் நூல்களே இலக்கியம். ஒரு சாரார் மட்டும் படித்துப் பயனடையக் கூடிய விண்ணியல், பொருளாதாரம், தத்துவம், வரலாறு ஆகியவை இலக்கியமாகா ; சாத்திரங்

கள்,' என்று வில்லியம் ஹென்றி ஹட்சன் (William Henry Hudson) என்பவர் கூறுகிறார்.

ஆனால், ஹாலம் (Hallam) என்பவர், 'மருத்துவமும் சமயநூலும் சட்டநூலும் இலக்கியங்களாகும்,' என மறுத்துக் கூறுவர். மௌல்டன் (Moulton) என்பவர் இலக்கியத்தைப் பற்றிக் கூறும் போது அதில் சமயநூல், தத்துவம், வரலாறு, மொழி நூல் ஆகியவைகளும் இடம் பெறுமெனவும், ஆதலின் இலக்கியம் வேறு, சாத்திரம் வேறு எனப் பிரிக்க இயலாதெனவும் கூறுவர்.

வாழ்க்கை முறையினை மொழி வாயிலாக எடுத்துக் காட்டுவதுதான் இலக்கியமென்று ஹட்சன் என்பவர் சுருக்கமாகக் கூறுகின்றார்.

சிறந்த எண்ணங்கள் பொதிந்து கிடக்கும் நூலே இலக்கியமாகும் என்பது எமர்சன் (Emerson) என்பவரின் கருத்தாகும்.

தாமஸ் கார்லைல் (Thomas Carlyle) என்பவர், 'இலக்கியம் என்பது இயற்கையில் எழில் நலத்தைச் சுட்டிக்காட்டி மக்களை நல்வழியிற்செலுத்தி இறைவன்பால் ஈடுபடச் செய்வது,' என்பர்.

இவ்வாறு இலக்கியம் என்பதற்கு அறிஞர்கள் தரும் பல்வேறு விளக்கங்களை நோக்குமிடத்து, மக்கள் அறிவினை வளப்படுத்தி, அவர்களை நல்லொழுக்கத்தில் ஈடுபடும்படி செய்து, வாழ்க்கை முறையினைச் செம்மைப்படுத்துவதே இலக்கியத்தின் குறிக்கோள் என்று கூறலாம்.

இலக்கியம் எவ்வாறு மக்களுடைய பண்பாட்டிற்கும் உயர்வுக்கும் கருவியாய் இருக்கின்றதோ, அவ்வாறே மக்களுடைய யாக்கையின் வளர்ச்சிக்கும் தூய்மைக்கும் நீரும் நீர் நிறைந்த ஆறும் கருவியாய் இருக்கின்றன. ஆற்று நீர் மக்களுக்கு உணவு வளத்தைத் தருகின்றது. அதனால், மக்கள் இன்ப நிலையிலிருந்து இனிய இலக்கியங்களை இயற்றுகின்றார்கள். பசியறியாது வளத்துடனிருக்கும் நாட்டு மக்களே இன்னிசையிலும் கூத்திலும் ஈடுபடுகின்றார்கள். உணவுச் செருக்கினலேயே கவலையற்றுப் புலவர்கள் நூல் செய்தார்களென்பதைச் சிலப்பதிகார உரைச் சிறப்புப்

பாயிரத்துப் "பொப்பண்ண காங்கேயர் கோனளித்த, சோற்றுச் செருக்கல்லவோ தமிழ் மூன்றுரை சொல்வித்ததே!" என்பதனுலும் அறியலாம். உலக இலக்கியங்களை எண்ணி நோக்கின், வளமுடைய நாட்டைப் பொருளாகக் கொண்டு தோன்றியவையே மிகுதியாய் உள்ளன. மக்கள் ஆற்று வளத்தை இனிமையாகப் பாடி மகிழ்ந்தார்களென் பதைப் பரிபாடலிற்காண்கிறோம்.

உலக வரலாற்றை ஆராயும் போது ஆற்றங்கரைகளி லேயே நாகரிகம் வளர்ச்சியுற்றதென்பதை அறியலாம். ஆற்றங்கரை, மக்கள் வாழ்வுக்குத் துணையாக அமை கின்றது. ஆற்று நீர் உடல் வளத்திற்கும் உணவுப் பெருக் கத்திற்கும் உறுதுணையாக அமைகின்றமையின், மக்கள் மிகுதியாக அப்பகுதியையே நாடுகின்றனர்கள். அப்பகுதியில் குடியேறும் மக்கள் பல்வேறு இனத்தவர்களாய் இருப்பது இயற்கையே. அச்சூழ்நிலையில் மக்கள் நாகரிகமும் சிறிது சிறிதாக வளரத் தொடங்குகிறது. அந்நாகரிக வளர்ச்சி யோடு கலை வளர்ச்சியும் மொழி வளர்ச்சியும் இலக்கிய வளர்ச்சியும் ஏற்படுகின்றன. அவ்வாறு ஆற்றங்கரையில் வளர்ந்த நாகரிகங்களுக்கு நைல் நதிக்கரையில் வளர்ந்த எகிப்திய நாகரிகமும், யூபரட்டிஸ், டைகிரிஸ் கரையில் தோன்றிய மெசபொட்டோமிய நாகரிகமும், சிந்து நதிக் கரையில் சிறப்புற்று விளங்கிய சிந்துவெளி நாகரிகமும் சிறந்த எடுத்துக்காட்டுக்களாம். தமிழ் நாட்டு ஆற்றங்கரை களில் தோன்றிய நாகரிகங்களில் காவிரியின் கரையில் தோன்றிய நாகரிகம் தலை சிறந்ததாகும்.

இன்பந்தரும் இயற்கைக் காட்சிகள் மலை, கடல், ஆறு முதலியன. ஆதலின், புலவர்கள் சிறந்த இலக்கியங்களைப் படைக்கும் போது இத்தகைய இயற்கைக் காட்சிகளோடு தொடர்பு படுத்திக் கருத்துக்களை இனிய எளிய முறையில் விளக்கினுர்கள்.

வளத்தையும் இன்பத்தையும் பெருக்கி மக்கட்பிறவியின் குறிக்கோளைப் பெறத் துணை செய்வது ஆறு. ஆறு எல்லா நலன்களையும் அடைய வழியாய் உள்ளது. ஆதலின், ஆறு என்னும் சொல்லுக்கே வழி என்னும் பொருள் தோன்று வதாயிற்று.

" நல்லாறு எனப்படுவது யாதெனின் யாதொன்றும்
கொல்லாமை சூழும் நெறி." (திருக்குறள் - 324)

" அறத்தாற்றின் இல்வாழ்க்கை ஆற்றின் புறத்தாற்றின்
போஒய்ப் பெறுவ தெவன்?" (திருக்குறள் - 46)

என்னும் இக்குறள்களில் ஆறு என்பது வழி என்னும் பொருளில் வருதலைக் காண்க.

வையை நதிக்குத் தனியே பரிபாடலில் பாடல் உளது. அது போலக் காவிரிக்குத் தனியாகப் பாடல் இருந்திருக்கலாம் என்று கருதுவது பிழையாகாது. எனினும், இதுகாறும் அத்தகைய பழஞ்செய்யுள்கள் நமக்குக் கிடைக்கவில்லை. ஆயினும், சங்க காலத்திலிருந்து இந்நாள் வரை புலவர் பெருமக்களால் காவிரி போற்றப்பட்டு வந்துள்ளது. அவர்களுடைய குறிப்புக்களால் காவிரியாற்றின் அமைப்பும், அழகும், பயனும் பல்லாற்றானும் தெளிவாகின்றன.

சங்க கால நூலாகிய பட்டினப்பாலையில் காவிரி போற்றப்படுகிறது. அதனால், அந்த ஆற்றைப் பொருளாகக் கொண்டு இலக்கியமெழுந்தது புலனாகின்றது. பட்டினப்பாலையில் காவிரிக்கு மாயத்தன்மை கற்பிக்கப் பட்டுள்ளது.

" வான்பொய்ப்பினும் தான்பொய்யா
மலைத்தலைய கடற்காவிரி
புனல்பரந்து பொன்கொழிக்கும்" (பட்டினப்பாலை அடி 5-7)

'நீரைத் தந்து பொன்னை ஆக்கும் ஆற்றலுடையது காவிரி' என அதற்குப் பெருஞ்சிறப்புக் கொடுக்கப்பட்டுள்ளது. இது வெறுங்கற்பனையாய் இல்லாமல், காவிரி நீரால் நில வளம் பெருகிச் செந்நெல் விளைந்து நாட்டின் பொருள்நிலை மேம்படுவதையும் காவிரி மணலில் பொற்றுகள் கலந்து தோன்றுவதையும் பாநலம் பெறக் கூறியதேயாகும்.

ஆற்றங்கரையில் வளர்ந்த இலக்கியங்களில் சில செய்யுள்களை அகநானூற்றில் காண்கிறோம். ஆட்டனத்தியும ஆதிமந்தியும் கடலாடிய போது காவிரி ஆட்டனத்தியைக் கவர்ந்து சென்றது. தன் காதலனை இழந்த ஆதிமந்தி தன் கணவனைப் பல இடங்களிலும் தேடி அலமந்தாள். அவளுடைய துன்பங்கண்ட காவிரி மனமிரங்கி ஆட்டனத்தியைக்

கரையில் கொண்டு வந்து சேர்த்தது. ஆதிமந்தியின் தோழியாகிய மருதி என்பவள் அவனைக் கொண்டு வந்து காட்டினாள். ஆட்டனத்தியைக் காவிரி இழுத்துச் சென்றதும், ஆதிமந்தி பேதுற்றலமந்ததும், மருதி ஆட்டனத்தியை ஆதிமந்திக்குக் காட்டியதும் அகநானூற்றில் பல பாடல்களில் குறிப்பிடப்படுகின்றன.

"ஆட்ட னத்தி நலனயந் துரைஇத்
தாழிருங் கதுப்பின் காவிரி வௌவலின்
மாதிரந் துழைஇ மதிமருண் டிடருழந்த
ஆதி மந்தி காதலற் காட்டிப்
படுகடல் புக்க பாடல்சால் சிறப்பின்
மருதி யன்ன மாண்புகழ் பெறீஇயர்." (அகம். 222)

"கச்சினன் கழலினன் தேந்தார் மார்பினன்
வகையமை பொலிந்த வனப்பமை தெரியல்
சுரியலம் பொருநனைக் கண்டி ரோவென
ஆதி மந்தி பேதுற் றினையச்
சிறைபறைந் துரைஇச் செங்குணக் கொழுகும்
அந்தண் காவிரி போலக்
கொண்டுகை வலித்தல் சூழ்ந்திசின் யானே." (அகம். 76)

காவிரிக் கரையில் பிறந்து வாழ்ந்த புலவர்கள் அவ்வாழ்வின் பயனாக இயற்றிய இலக்கியங்களும், காவிரியாற்றினால் உளதாம் பயனை நேரிற்கண்டறிந்த புலவர்கள் அக்காட்சியின் பயனாக இயற்றியனவும் ஆகிய இவ்விருதிற இலக்கியங்களும் தோன்றுதற்கு இடனாயமைந்த வரலாற்று நிகழ்ச்சிகளும் காவிரிக் கரையில் தோன்றிய இலக்கியங்களாகும்.

கோவூர் கிழார், காவிரிப்பூம்பட்டினத்துக் காரிக்கண்ணனார், உறையூர் முதுகண்ணன் சாத்தனார் முதலியோர் சோழநாட்டிலேயே பிறந்து அந்நாட்டைக் குறித்துச் சிறந்த இலக்கியமியற்றினர். இளங்கோவடிகள் சேரநாட்டிற் பிறந்த புலவர். அவர் காவிரியைக் குறித்துப் பாடுகின்றார். இவ்விருதிறத்தாரையவும் காவிரியின் கரையில் தோன்றிய இலக்கியங்களே.

காவிரியாறு பாயும் சோழவள நாட்டில் தோன்றிய புலவர்கள் மனவளஞ் சிறந்திருந்தார்கள். அவர்கள்

நாட்டுக்கும் மொழிக்கும் செய்த தொண்டு பாராட்டத் தகுந்தது.

சோழன் குளமுற்றத்துத்துஞ்சிய கிள்ளி வளவன் பகைமையால் மலையமான் திருமுடிக்காரியின் மக்களை யானைக் காலிலிட்டுக் கொல்லக் கொண்டு வந்து நிறுத்துகின்றான். கோவூர் கிழார் அப்போது அரசன்முன் நிற்கின்றார். சிறுவர்கள் களிற்றினைக் கண்டு அழுதலை மறந்து நிற்கின்றார்கள். புலவர்க்கு உள்ளத்தில் இரக்கம் மிகுகின்றது. "கிள்ளி வளவ, யானொன்று கூறுவேன்; கேட்பாயாக: நீயோ, புறாவின் துன்பம் ஒன்றேயன்றி, ஏனையோருடைய துன்பத்தையும் தீர்த்த சோழனுடைய மரபில் வந்தாய். இம்மக்களின் தந்தையோ, கற்றோரது வறுமையைக் கண்டிரங்கித் தன்னிடமுள்ள பொருளைப் பகுத்துக் கொடுக்கும் வள்ளலாவன். முன்பு அஞ்சி அழுத இச்சிறுவர்கள் களிற்றினைக் கண்டு அழுதலை மறந்து இம்மன்றத்தைக் கண்டு வெருவி நிற்கின்றார்கள். அரசர் பெரும, உன்னுடைய மேம்பாட்டையும் இவர்களுடைய தன்மையையும் கூறினேன். இனிமேல் நீ விரும்பியதைச் செய்க," என்றார். அரசன் உளம் நெகிழ்ந்து அம்மக்களை விடுவித்தான்.

இப்புலவர், பிறிதோர் பாட்டில் புலவர்களுடைய வாழ்க்கை இயல்பைத் தெரிவிக்கின்றார். சோழன் நலங்கிள்ளியிடமிருந்து இளந்தத்தரென்னும் புலவர் காரியாற்றுத்துஞ்சிய நெடுங்கிள்ளியிடம் தூது சென்றார். நெடுங்கிள்ளி, புலவரை ஒற்றரென ஐயுற்றுக் கொல்லப் புகுந்தான். கோவூர் கிழார் இடை நின்று தடுத்து, "அரசே, புலவர் வாழ்க்கை எத்தகையதென்பதை எண்ணின் நின் உள்ளம் உருகும். பழுமரத்தை நாடிச் செல்லும் பறவை போலத் தூரத்தைக் கருதாது வள்ளல்களைத் தேடிச்சென்று, தம்முடைய தெளிந்த நாவினாலே செவ்விதாகப் பாடி, கொடுத்ததை மகிழ்வோடேற்றுச் சுற்றத்தாரை உண்பித்து, எஞ்சியதைப் பாதுகாத்து வைக்காது யாவருக்கும் கொடுக்கும் புலவர் வாழ்க்கை பிறருக்குத் தீது கருதியதன்றே! வள்ளல்களிடம் சென்று வருந்திப் பரிசில் பெறும் வாழ்க்கையன்றோ புலவர் வாழ்க்கை!" என்று கூறி, அப்புலவர் சிறிதுங்குற்றமுடையர் அல்லரெனத் தெரிவித்தார். அரசன்

அப்புலவரைக் கொல்லாது விடுத்தான். அவ்வரசனிடத்தி லேயே புலவர் தம் பெருமையினையும் எடுத்தியம்புகின்றார்: "மன்னவ, 'புலவர்களெல்லாம் நம் போன்ற அரசர்களிடம் பரிசில் பெறுபவர்கள்தாமே!' எனக் கருதாதே.

" நண்ணார் நாண அண்ணாந் தேகி
மண்ணாள் செல்வரை நிகர்க்கும்
நும்மோ ரன்ன செம்மலு முடைத்தே."

என்கின்றார்.

அரசர் இருவர் மாறுபட்டவிடத்து அறிவுரை கூறிப் புலவர் போரைத் தடுத்திருக்கின்றனர். எட்டுத்தொகை நூல்களை ஆராயின், அவர்களுடைய பரந்த உள்ளமும் அரசர்க்கு அறிவுரை கூறி நாட்டிற்கு நலன் செய்ததும் அவர்களுடைய கருத்துக்கள் சிறந்த இலக்கியங்களாய் மக்களால் போற்றப்படுவதும் அறியலாம்.

காவிரியின் கரையில் வளர்ந்த இலக்கியங்களுள் பொருநராற்றுப்படையும் ஒன்று. பொருநராற்றுப்படையில் கரிகாற்பெருவளத்தான் எளியாரையும் விரும்பி உபசரிக்கும் தன்மையும், அவன் புலவர்களுக்கு அளிக்கும் பல்வேறு உணவுகளும், பரிசிலருக்குத் தேர், யானை முதலியவற்றைக் கொடுத்தலும், பொருநர் பொற்றாமரை பெறுதலும், விறலியர் பொன்னரிமாலை பெறுதலும் கூறப்பட்டுள்ளன. இவ்விலக்கியம் கி. பி. இரண்டாம் நூற்றாண்டுக்கு முன் முடத்தாமக் கண்ணியாரால் இயற்றப்பட்டதாகும்.

கடியலூர் உருத்திரன் கண்ணனார் பட்டினப்பாலையில் காவிரியால் உண்டாய வளத்தைக் குறிப்பிடுகின்றார். காவிரி பாய்தலால் செல்வம் செழிக்கின்றது. நெல் வீட்டின் முற்றத்தில் உலர்கின்றது. அதனைத் தின்ன வரும் கோழிகளைக் காவலாய் உள்ள பெண்கள் தங்கள் குழைகளை எறிந்து ஓட்டுகின்றார்கள். அக்குழைகள் தெருக்களில் கிடந்து சிறுவர்கள் சிறு தேருருட்டிச் செல்லும் பொழுது தடுக்கின்றன. இவ்வாறு காவிரி பாயும் நிலவளச் செழிப்பு விளக்கப்படுகின்றது.

காவிரிப்பூம்பட்டினத்தே ஆடவரும் மகளிரும் கடலாடி இன்பந்துய்ப்பதும், ஏற்றுமதி இறக்குமதிப் பொருள்களுக்

குப் புலி முத்திரை பொறித்துச் சுங்கம் கொள்ளும் முறையும் நன்கு விளக்கப்பட்டுள்ளன.

ஐம்பெருங்காப்பியங்களுள் சிலப்பதிகாரமும் மணி மேகலையும் காவிரியின் கரையில் தோன்றிய இலக்கியங்க ளாகும்.

கோவலனுடன் மாதவி கடற்கரையிலிருந்த பொழுது பாடிய பாடல்கள் உள்ளத்தை ஈர்ப்பனவாகும். காவிரி யாறு செல்லும் கவினுறு தோற்றம் மாதவியினுள்ளத்தில் கவிதையை எழுப்புகின்றது. அவள் காவிரியினழகில் ஈடு பட்டுப் பாடுகின்றாள்.

" மருங்கு வண்டு சிறந்தார்ப்ப
மணிப்பூ வாடை யதுபோர்த்துக்
கருங்க யற்கண் விழித்தொல்கி
நடந்தாய் வாழி காவேரி !
கருங்க யற்கண் விழித்தொல்கி
நடந்த வெல்லாம் நின்கணவன்
திருந்து செங்கோல் வளையாமை
அறிந்தேன் வாழி காவேரி !"

(சிலம்பு, கானல் வரி, 25)

இந்திரவிழவூரெடுத்த காதையில் இந்திரனை நீராட்டுவ தற்குக காவிரியின் நன்னீரைக் கொண்டு வருகின்றனர். அதனை இளங்கோவடிகள்,

' தண்ணறுங் காவிரித் தாதுமலி பெருந்துறைப்
புண்ணிய நன்னீர் பொற்குடத்து ஏந்தி "

(சிலம்பு இந்திரவிழவூரெடுத்த காதை, 145-46)

எனக் கூறிக் காவிரி நன்னீரின் தெய்வத்தன்மையைப் புலப் படுத்துகின்றார்.

காவிரி நாடுடைமைபற்றிச் சோழன் **காவிரி நாடன்** எனப் போற்றப்படுகின்றான்.

" ஞாயிறு போற்றுதும் ஞாயிறு போற்றுதும்
***காவிரி நாடன்** திகிரிபோல் பொற்கோட்டு*
மேரு வலந்திரித லான்."

(சிலம்பு, மங்கல வாழ்த்துப் பாடல், 4)

இங்குச் சோழனைக் காவிரி நாடன் எனக் கூறுவதன் மூலம் புலவர் காவிரியின் சிறப்பைப் புலப்படுத்துகின்றார். அவர்

வேளாளரைக் குறிப்பிடும் போது

" பரப்புநீர்க் காவிரிப் பாவைதன் புதல்வர் "

(சிலம்பு, நாடுகாண் காதை, அடி 148)

எனக் குறிப்பிடுகின்றார்; காவிரியைக் குறிப்பிடும் போது காவிரிக்குத் தெய்வத்தன்மையைக் கற்பிக்கின்றார்.

" தெய்வக் காவிரித் தீதுதீர் சிறப்பும் "

(நாடுகாண்காதை, கட்டுரை, அடி, 8)

என்னும் அடியினைக் காண்க. காவிரி பாயும் நாட்டின் நில வளத்தைக் குறிப்பிடும் போது,

" தாங்கா விளையுள் காவிரி நாடு "

(சிலம்பு, கடலாடுகாதை, அடி 30, 31)

என்று சிறப்பித்துரைக்கின்றார்.

இராச ரிஷியும் யோகிகளுட்சிறந்தவருமாகிய கவேரரென்பவர் முத்திபெறுதலை விரும்பிப் பிரமதேவரைக் குறித்து அரிய தவம் செய்து அவர் அருளால் விஷ்ணு மாயையைத் தம் மகளாக அடைந்து முத்தி பெற்றனரென்றும், பின்பு அக்கன்னி பிரமதேவர் கட்டளையின்படி நதி வடிவுகொண்டு சென்றமையால் அந்நதி கவேர கன்னி என்றும், காவேரி என்றும் பெயர் பெற்றதென்றும் ஆக்கிநேய புராணத்தில் காவிரி மகாத்துமியத்தில் கூறப்பட்டுள்ளன. இப்புராணம் வடநூல்.

அக்கால மக்கள் குமரியில் நீராடுவது புண்ணியமாகக் கருதியது போலக் காவிரியில் நீராடுவதையும் புண்ணியமாகக் கருதினர்கள்.

" குரங்கு செய்கடல் குமரியம் பெருந்துறைப்
பரந்துசெல் மாக்களொடு தேடினன் பெயர்வோன்
கடல்மண்டு பெருந்துறைக் காவிரி யாடிய
வடமொழி யாளரொடு வருவோன் "

(மணிமேகலை, 5 : 37-40)

என்பதனாலும்,

" கங்கை யாடிலென் காவிரி யாடிலென்
கொங்கு தண்குமரித்துறை யாடிலென்
ஒங்கு மாகடல் ஓதநீ ராடிலென்
எங்கும் ஈசனென் னாதவர்க் கில்லையே."

(அப்பர் தேவாரம், 6225)

என்பதனுலும் காவிரியில் நீராடுதல் புண்ணியமாகக் கருதப் பட்டதென்பது விளங்குகின்றது.

காந்தமன் என்னும் சோழன் அகத்தியரை வேண்டிக் கொள்ள, அவர் தமது குண்டிகையைக் கவிழ்த்ததாகவும், அதுவே காவிரியாகப் பெருகிற்றென்றும் மணிமேகலையில் கூறப்படுகின்றது.

" கஞ்ச வேட்கையிற் காந்தமன் வேண்ட
அமர முனிவன் அகத்தியன் தனது
கரகங் கவிழ்த்த காவிரிப் பாவை "

(மணிமேகலே, பதிகம், 10-13)

காவிரியைத் தெய்வத் தன்மை உடையதாகமணிமேகலே காட்டுகின்றது.

காவிரியின் நன்னீர் செல்வ வளம் பெருக்குதலும் அதனுல் மக்கள் மனநலம் பெறுதலும் ஆண்டவனிடத்தில் ஈடுபாடு கொள்ளுதலும் தேவாரத்தில் குறிக்கப்படுகின்றன.

" முத்திசையும் புனற்பொன்னி மொய்பவளங் கொழித்துந்தப்
பத்தர்பலர் நீர்மூழ்கிப் பலகாலும் பணிந்தேத்த
எத்திசையும் வானவர்கள் எம்பெருமா னெனஇறைஞ்சும்
அத்திசையாம் ஐயாறர்க் காளாய்நான் உய்ந்தேனே!"

(அப்பர், நான்காம் திருமுறை, 4290)

" களித்துக் கலந்ததொர் காதற் கசிவொடு காவிரிவாய்க்
குளித்துத் தொழுதுமுன் நின்றஇப் பத்தரைக் கோதில் செந்தேன்
தெளித்துச் சுவையமு தூட்டி அமரர்கள் சூழிருப்ப
அளித்துப் பெருஞ்செல்வ மாக்கும்ஐ யாறன் அடித்தலமே."

(அப்பர், நான்காம் திருமுறை, 5047)

திருஞானசம்பந்தர் காவிரி பாயும் நாட்டின் வளத்தை அழகுறக் கூறியுள்ளார். திருத்தக்கதேவரும் சோழநாட்டில் பிறந்தபடியால் திருஞானசம்பந்தரைப் போலவே காவிரி நாட்டின் வளத்தைக் குறிப்பிடுகின்ருர்.

" கோழைமிட றுககவி கோளுமில வாகஇசை கூடும்வகையால்
ஏழையடி யாரவர்கள் யாவைசொன சொல்மகிழும் ஈசனிடமாம்
தாழையிள நீர்முதிய காய்கமுகின் வீழநிரை தாறு சிதறி
வாழைஉதிர் வீழ்கனிகள் ஊறிவயல் சேறுசெயும் வைகாவிலே."

(சம்பந்தர் தேவாரம், 3559)

" காய்மாண்ட தெங்கின் பழம்வீழக் கமுகின் நெற்றிப்
பூமாண்ட தீந்தேன் தொடைகீறி வருக்கை போழ்ந்து
தேமாங் கனிசிதறி வாழைப் பழங்கள் சிந்தும்
ஏமாங் கதமென் றிசையாற் றிசைபோய துண்டே."

(சிந்தாமணி, நாமகளிலம்பகம், 31)

தென்னையிலிருந்து இளநீர் கமுகின்மீது வீழ அதன் தாறுகள் சிதறி வாழைக்கனிகள் மீது வீழ்ந்து சாறு வயலில் வழிந்தோடியதாகத் திருஞானசம்பந்தர் குறிப்பிடுகின்றார். இக்கருத்தினையே பத்தாம் நூற்றாண்டில் விளங்கிய திருத்தக்க தேவரும் மேலும் சிறிது விரிவுபடுத்திக் கூறியுள்ளதையும் கண்டோம்.

மக்கள் உள்ளத்தைக் காவிரி கவர்ந்த நிலை, பிறமொழி இலக்கியங்களாலும் கல்வெட்டுக்களாலுங்கூட அறியக் கிடக்கின்றது.

காவிரியின் இயற்கை எழிலையும் தெய்விகத் தோற்றத்தையும் கண்ட பல்லவப் பேரரசனின் புலவர் காவிரிக்கரை வரை பல்லவரது பேரரசு பரந்துள்ளது எனப் புகழ வேண்டிய இடத்தில் பின்வருமாறு அழகாகக் கூறியிருப்பது நாம் கருதத்தக்கது:

" நதிப் பிரியனை தேவன் நயனபிராமமான நீரையும், தோட்டங்களென்னும் மாலைகளையும் பிரிய குணங்களையும் உடைத்தான காவிரி நதியைக் கண்டு அவள்மேல் காதல் கொள்வானென்று பர்வதராஜனது பெண் ஐயமுற்றுப் பிறந்த வீட்டை விட்டுச் சிராப்பள்ளி மலைமேல் நின்று கொண்டு, 'இந்நதி பல்லவனது' என்று சொல்லிக் கொண்டே இருக்கின்றாள்."

இங்குக் "கங்கையிற் புனிதமாய காவிரி" என்னும் ஆன்றோர் வாக்கின் பொருளைக் கங்கையோடு உடன் பிறப்புரிமையுள்ள மலையரசன் மகளே கூறுவதாகப் புனைந்துள்ளது பெரிதும் ஏற்றந்தருவதொன்றாகும்.

காவிரித் தொடர்புடைய திருச்சிராமலை இமயத்தினும் இனிதாகத் தோற்றமளிக்கின்றது.

ஆழ்வார்கள் பாடல்களிலும் சிலப்பதிகாரத்திலும் காவிரியின் சிறப்பும் அக்காவிரியின் ஆற்றிடைக் குறையில் பரந்

தாமன் பள்ளி கொண்டிருப்பதும் பத்திச் சுவை ததும்பப் பாடப்பட்டுள்ளன.

''இருளிரியச் சுடர்மணிக ளிமைக்கும் நெற்றி
இனத்துத்தி அணிபணமா யிரங்க ளார்ந்த
அரவரசப் பெருஞ்சோதி அனந்த னென்னும்
அணிவிளங்கும் உயர்வெள்ளை அணையை மேவித்
திருவரங்கப் பெருநகருள் தெண்ணீர்ப் பொன்னி
திரைக்கையால் அடிவருடப் பள்ளி கொள்ளும்
கருமணியைக் கோமளத்தைக் கண்டு கொண்டென்
கண்ணிணைகள் என்றுகொலோ களிக்கும் நாளே!''

(பெருமாள் திருமொழி, 1)

'' கங்கையிற் புனித மாய காவிரி நடுவு பாட்டுப்
பொங்குநீர் பரந்து பாயும் பூம்பொழி லரங்கந் தன்னுள்''

(திருமாலை-23).

''நீல மேகம் நெடும்பொற் குன்றத்துப்
பால்விரிந் தகலாது படிந்தது போல
ஆயிரம் விரித்தெழு தலையுடை அருந்திறல்
பாயற் பள்ளிப் பலர்தொழு தேத்த
விரிதிரைக் காவிரி வியன்பெருந் துருத்தித்
திருவமர் மார்பன் கிடந்த வண்ணமும் ''

(சிலம்பு. காடுகாண் காதை, 35—40)

கடவுள் வழிபாட்டோடு ஒத்த நிலையில் வான் சிறப்பைப் பாடி வழிபட்ட வள்ளுவர்,

'' வானின் றுலகம் வழங்கி வருதலான்
தானமிழ்தம் என்றுணரற் பாற்று ''

என்று பாடினர்.

இளங்கோவடிகளோ, அவ்வான் மழையாகப் பொழியும் பெருங்கருணையை நினைந்து,

'' மாமழை போற்றுதும் மாமழை போற்றுதும்
நாமநீர் வேலி உலகிற் கவன்குலத்தோ
டோங்கிப் பரந்தொழுக லான்.''

(மங்கல வாழ்த்துப் பாடல்: 7—9)

என வாழ்த்தினர்.

கம்ப நாடரோ, மழையாகப் பொழிந்து வேண்டுவோர்க் கெல்லாம் தானகவே சென்று வளம் பெருக்கும் ஆற்றின் சிறப்பை,

" தாதுகு சோலை தோறும் சண்பகக் காவு தோறும்
போதவிழ் பொய்கை தோறும் புதுமணல் தடங்கள் தோறும்
மாதவி வேலிப் பூக வனந்தொறும் வயல்கள் தோறும்
ஓதிய உடம்பு தோறும் உயிர்என உலாய தன்றே."

(கம்பராமாயணம், ஆற்றுப் படலம், 20)

எனப் பரவிப் பணிவாராயினர்.

வள்ளுவர் பொதுமறை செய்தாராதலின், பொதுமறைக் கேற்ப வானெனக் கூறினர். இளங்கோவடிகளோ, அவ்வான் மழையாகப் பெய்வதை மகிழ்ந்து வணங்கினர். கம்பரோ, வான் நின்று இழிந்த மழை பல கால் வழியாக நாட்டை வளப்படுத்தச் செய்யும் காவிரியாற்றைக் கண்டு மகிழ்ந்து ஆறு என்ற நிலையில் அடி பணிவாராயினர். இக்கருத்து வளர்ச்சியும் கருதத்தக்கது.

காவிரி பொன் துகள் நிரம்பியிருத்தலின், பொன்னி என்று வழங்கப்படுவதாயிற்று.

காவிரியின் சிறப்பு, பொய்யா மொழியார் பாதி பாட, ஔவையார் பாதி பாடிய வெண்பா ஒன்றிலும் புலப்படு கின்றது:

" தண்ணீரும் காவிரியே தார்வேந்தன் சோழனே
மண்ணாவது சோழ மண்டலமே—பெண்ணாவாள்
அம்பர்ச் சிலம்பி அரவிந்தத் தாளணியும்
செம்பொற் சிலம்பே சிலம்பு."

(பெருந்தொகை, 1454)

கண்டி நாடு பஞ்சம் பட்ட காலத்துக் கப்பல் ஆயிரத்தில் நெல்லனுப்பிப் புதுவைச் சடையன் காத்தான். அதனைப் பாராட்டி ஈழ நாட்டரசனான பரராசசிங்கன் பாடிய பாடல் காவிரி பாயும் நாட்டின் வளத்தையும் அந்நாட்டு மக்களின் வள்ளற்றன்மையையும் காட்டுகின்றது:

" இரவு நண்பக லாகி லென்பகல்
இருள றாஇர வாகிலென்
இரவி எண்திசை மாறி லென்கட
லேழும் ஏறிலென் வற்றிலென்
மரபு தங்கிய முறைமை பேணிய
மன்னர் போகிலென் ஆகிலென்
வளமை யின்புறு சோழ மண்டல
வாழ்க்கை காரண மாகவே

கருது செம்பொனின் அம்ப லத்திலொர்
கடவுள் நின்று நடிக்குமே;
காவி ரித்திரு நதியி லேயொரு
கருணை மாமுகில் துயிலுமே ;
தருஉ யர்ந்திடு புதுவை யம்பதி
தங்கு மானிய சேகரன்
சங்க ரன்தரு சடைய னென்றொரு
தரும தேவதை வாழுமே?" (பெருந்தொகை. 1135)

காவிரியாறு இல்லாவிட்டால், சோழவள நாடு வளஞ் சிறந்திருக்க முடியாது; பஞ்சம் பட்ட காலத்துக் கண்டி நாட்டுக்கு உதவி செய்திருக்கவும் முடியாது; அக்குழ்நிலையில் காவிரியாற்றின் பெருமை பேசும் இப்பாடலும் தோன்றி யிருக்க முடியாது. இவ்வாறு சிறந்த பாடல்களும் இலக்கியங் களும் தோன்றுவதற்குக் காவிரியின் சிறப்பே காரணமாய் அமைகின்றது.

கம்பராமாயணம் வடமொழிக் கதையை அடிப்படை யாகக் கொண்டிருந்தாலும், கம்பர் காவிரி நாட்டில் வாழ்ந்தவ ராதலின், கோசல நாட்டைக் குறிப்பிடும் போதெல்லாம் காவிரி நாட்டையே உவமையாகக் கூறுகின்றார். "உயர்ந்த தன்மேற்றே உள்ளுங்காலை," என்பது விதியாதலின், உவமையாக எடுத்தாளும் பொருள் உயர்ந்ததாக இருக்க வேண்டும். ஆகவே, கம்பர், கோசல நாட்டினும் காவிரி உயர்ந்ததெனக் கருதியே, "காவிரி நாடன்ன கழனி நாடொரீஇ" (அயோத்தியா காண்டம், குகப்படலம், 1) எனக் குறிப்பிடுகின்றார். ஆரணிய காண்டத்தில்,

" கன்னியிளை வாழைகனி யீவகதிர் வாலின்
செந்நெலுள தேனொழுகு போதுமுள **தெய்வப்**
பொன்னி*யென லாயபுன லாறுமுள போதா*
அன்னமுள பொன்னிவளொ டன்பின்விளை யாட "
(பாடல், 58)

எனக் காவிரியைத் 'தெய்வப் பொன்னி' எனக் கூறிப் பேரரசும் பெருநாடும் ஒருங்கே பிரிந்து வாழும் பிராட்டி யாரது திருவுள்ளத்தை மகிழச் செய்தற்குரிய பொருள்களில் ஒரு புனலைக் கூறுகின்றார்.

அப்புனல்தானும் தெய்வத் தன்மை வாய்ந்த பொன்னி போன்றது எனக் கூறும் போது காவிரியைப் பற்றி அவர்

கருத்துள் பொதிந்து துதைந்த ஏற்ற உணர்ச்சி எளிது புலனாகின்றது.

இத்தகைய ஈடுபாட்டாலன்றோ கம்பர் கட்டுக்கடங்காத காவிரியை,

> " நன்னி யறிந்தனள் கங்கை திறர்பினள்
> பொன்னி கரையறிந்து போமளவோ — நின்னீர்
> உரைகிடக்க லாமோ உலகுடைய தாயே!
> கரைகடக்க லாகாது காண்."

(பெருந்தொகை, 2155)

என வாழ்த்தி வணங்கி அதன் சீற்றத்தைத் தவிர்த்தார்.

கம்பர் 'உலகம் புகழும் காவிரி' எனக் கூற, அருணகிரி நாதரோ, 'ஏழுலகமும் புகழ் காவேரி' எனப்பாடி ஏற்ற மளிக்கின்றார். அவர் மலையைப் பற்றிப் பாடும் போதும் கோயிலைப் பற்றிப் பாடும் போதும் அவருடைய உள்ளம் காவிரியின் வளத்திலேயே ஈடுபடுகின்றது.

பத்தொன்பதாம் நூற்றாண்டில் எழுந்த இலக்கியங் களில் மகாவித்துவான் மீனாட்சிசுந்தரம் பிள்ளையவர்கள் இயற்றிய நூல்கள் குறிப்பிடத் தக்கனவாகும். அவர் இயற்றிய திருக்குடந்தைப் புராணம், மாயூரப் புராணம் ஆகிய வற்றில் காவிரியைப் பற்றிய குறிப்புக்கள் பெரிதும் இடம் பெறுகின்றன.

இருபதாம் நூற்றாண்டில் விளங்கிய ஐ. சாமிநாத முதலியார் என்பவர் காவிரியின் சிறப்புக்களைத் தெரிவிக்கும் 'காவிரி வெண்பா' என்னும் நூலை இயற்றியுள்ளார்.

திருவாவடுதுறை ஆதீனத்திலிருந்து தமிழிலக்கியங்கள் பல இயற்றியவர், வடநூற்கடலையும் தென்னூற்கடலையும் நிலை கண்டுணர்ந்த மாதவச் சிவஞானயோகியாராவர். அவர்க் குப்பின் அம்மடாலயத்திலிருந்து தமிழ் வளர்த்தவர்களுள் தலையாய பெரும்புலவர் மகாவித்துவான் மீனாட்சிசுந்தரம் பிள்ளையாவர். அவருடைய மாணவராகிய வேதநாயகம் பிள்ளையவர்களின் தமிழ்த்தொண்டும் பாராட்டற்குரியது.

மேற்கூறியனவேயன்றி, திருக்கோயில்களிலுள்ள கல் வெட்டுக்களும் சிற்பங்களும் காவிரியின் கரையில் தோன் றிய எழுதா இலக்கியங்களாய் மிளிர்கின்றன.

பட்டினப்பாலையில் காவிரி பற்றிய சுருங்கிய வருணனை யும் காவிரியின் வளத்தால் மக்கள் வாழ்வு வளம் பெற்ற முறையும், அரசியலமைப்பும், பொருளாதார வளர்ச்சியும் மக்கள் நாகரிகமும் புனைந்துரையில்லாமல் காட்டப்படு கின்றன.

காவிரியின் கரையில் தோன்றிய சங்ககால இலக்கியங் கள், நடந்த நிகழ்ச்சிகளை எளிய முறையில் புனைந்துரை அளவு கடவாமல் புதிய முறையில் படிப்போர் மகிழும் வண்ணம் நாடகக் காட்சிகளைப் போலக் கூறுகின்றன. பட்டினப்பாலையில் ஆசிரியரே படிப்போருக்குப் பல கருத்துக் களை அறிவிக்கின்றார். ஆனால், அகநானூற்றிலும் புறநா னூற்றிலும் ஆசிரியருடைய கருத்துக்கள் பிறர் மூலமாகப் பேசப்படுகின்றன. காவிரியைப் பற்றிச் சொல்லும்போது பல வரலாறுகள் குறிப்பிடப்படுகின்றன. இலக்கிய வளர்ச்சி யில் இது ஒரு முன்னேற்றமாகும்.

இதற்குப்பின் தோன்றிய சிலப்பதிகாரம், மணிமேகலை ஆகிய இரண்டும் மக்கள வாழ்க்கையைப் பொருளாகக் கொண்டு பட்டினப்பாலை போலக் கருத்துக்களை நேரடியாகக் கூறாமல், நாடக மக்கள் மூலம் சுவைபட அறிவிக்கின்றன. இலக்கிய வளர்ச்சியில் இது மிகப்பெரிய முன்னேற்றமாகும். சிலப்பதிகாரம் காப்பியத்திற்குரிய பண்புகள் அனைத்தும் நிரம்பி விளங்குகிறது. எல்லாச் சமயத்தின் கொள்கை களையும் கூறுவதால், எல்லாச் சமயத்தவரும் விரும்பிப் படிக்கும்படி அமைந்துள்ளது சுவை குன்றாமல் இருக்கும் பொருட்டு இடையிடையே பல கதைகள் அமைந்துள்ளன.

மணிமேகலையில் சமயப்பூசல்கள் இடம் பெறுகின்றன. இது காலத்தின் மாற்றத்தையும் அதனால் மக்கள் உள்ளம் மாறுபடுவதையும் காட்டுகிறது. சிலப்பதிகாரம் எல்லாச் சமயங்களையும் ஏற்றத்தாழ்வின்றிக் கூறிச செல்கின்றது. மணிமேகலையோ, புத்த மதத்திற்கே உயர்வு காட்டிச் செல் கின்றது. இது சீத்தலைச்சாத்தனாரின் மதப்பற்றைக் காட்டு கின்றது.

தேவாரமும் திவ்வியப்பிரபந்தமும், மக்கள் வாழ்க்கை பற்றிக் கூறாமல், இறைவன் மீது பத்தி கொண்டு பாடிய

பாடல்களாய்த் திகழ்கின்றன. சங்ககாலத்தில் சமயப் பொதுநோக்கு நிலவிற்று. பல்வேறு சமயங்களைப் பற்றிக் கூறினும், எல்லாச் சமயங்களும் ஏற்றத் தாழ்வின்றி ஒரு தன்மையனவாகவே கருதப்பட்டன. ஆனால், தேவாரமும் திவ்வியப் பிரபந்தமும் தோன்றிய காலத்தில் சமயப் பொது நோக்கொழிந்து சமணம் பௌத்தம் ஆகியவற்றைத் தாழ்த்திக் கூறும் நிலை வளர்ந்தது. சைவர்களும் வைணவர்களுங் கூடத் தங்களுள் மாறுபடும்படியான சூழ்நிலை உருவாயிற்று. சைவர் வைணவரைத் தாழ்த்தியும், வைணவர் சைவரைத் தாழ்த்தியும் பாடும் நிலை வளர்ந்தது. தொடக்கத்திலெழுந்த ஆழ்வார் பாடல்கள் சைவத்தையும் வைணவத்தையும் ஒத்த தன்மையிலேயே வைத்துக் குறிப்பிடுகின்றன. பின்னர் எழுந்த பாடல்கள் சைவத்தைத் தாழ்த்தி வைணவத்தை உயர்த்திக் கூறுகின்றன. அத்தகைய பாடல்களைத் திருவாய்மொழியிலும் காணலாம். சங்ககாலத்திலிருந்த சமரச மனப்பான்மை மாய்ந்து, சமயங்களுள் உயர்வு தாழ்வு கூறும் மனப்பான்மை தேவார திவ்வியப்பிரபந்த காலத்தில் தோன்றியது. அந்நூல்களின் சிறந்த நோக்கம் மக்களைப் பத்தி நெறியில் செலுத்தி ஆண்டவனிடம் ஈடுபட வைப்பதே யாகும். ஆகவே, அவையெல்லாம் தோத்திரப்பாடல்களாகவே அமைந்துள்ளன. இதனை இலக்கிய வளர்ச்சியில் வேறு துறையில் திரும்பிய முன்னேற்றமென்று கூறலாம்.

கம்பராமாயணமும் பெரியபுராணமும் பத்தி நெறியை அறிவுறுத்துவனவாயினும், தேவாரம் போலத் தோத்திரப் பாடல்களாக மட்டும் அல்லாமல், கதை மூலமாகப் பத்தி நெறியை வளர்க்கும் பாடல்களாகவும் அமைந்துள்ளன. இவையும் பத்தி இலக்கியமாயினும், கதையமைப்போடு சுவையாகச் செல்கின்றபடியால், தேவார திவ்வியப்பிரபந்த இலக்கிய வளர்ச்சியைவிட ஒரு படி சிறந்தனவெனத் துணிந்து கூறலாம்.

வடமொழி நூலை முதலாகக் கொண்டு தமிழில் சிறந்த பெருங்காப்பியமியற்றிய கம்பர், வழிநூல் செய்து இலக்கியம் வளர்க்கும் துறையில் வழி காட்டியாய் விளங்குகிறார். கதையும் கருத்தும் கடன்வாங்கினாலும் தமிழுக்கென்று ஒரு தனித் தன்மை உண்டு என்பதை மனத்தில் எண்ணித் தனித்

தமிழ்க் காப்பியமாகவே செய்த கம்பர், மொழி பெயர்த்து நூல் யாப்பார்க்கு முன்னின்று வழி காட்டுகின்றார்.

சேக்கிழார் தமிழ் நாட்டில் தோன்றிவளர்ச்சியுடகள் வரலாற்றையே பொருளாகக் கொண்டு தமிழ் நாட்டுக் கல்வெட்டுக்களை ஆதாரமாக நிறுத்தித் தமிழக வரலாற்றுக்குத் தக்க சான்று தருவதாக முதன்முதல் புராணம் இயற்றிய பெரியாராவர். புராணங்களுள் சேக்கிழார் இயற்றிய பெரிய புராணமே, புராணம் இயற்றுவார்க்கு வழி காட்டியாய்ப் புராணங்களுள் தலை சிறந்ததாய் விளங்குகிறது. கம்பராமாயணம் வைணவ நெறியைத் தழுவியதாய் இருக்க, பெரிய புராணமோ, சைவ நெறியை வலியுறுத்திச் செல்கின்றது. கம்பராமாயணம் எழுந்த காலத்தில் வைணவமும் பெரிய புராணம் எழுந்த காலத்தில் சைவமும் செல்வாக்குப் பெற்றிருந்தன என்றறியலாம்.

தேவாரம் திவ்வியப்பிரபந்தம் ஆகியவற்றின் இலக்கிய வளர்ச்சியைக் கம்பராமாயணம் பெரியபுராணம் ஆகியவற்றின் இலக்கிய வளர்ச்சியோடு ஒப்பிட்டு நோக்கின், பின்னவை கதையமைப்போடு பத்தி நெறியினை வலியுறுத்துகின்றமையின், முன்னவையினும் பரந்த தன்மையில் ஒருபடி முன்னேறின எனவே கருதலாம்.

தமிழில் மிகுதியாக வட சொற்களைக் கலந்து அருணகிரி நாதர் திருப்புகழை இயற்றினார். இதனை இலக்கிய வளர்ச்சியாகக் கருதுவதற்கில்லை. எவ்வளவுக்கெவ்வளவு வடசொற்களைக் கலக்கின்றோமோ, அவ்வளவுக்கவ்வளவு தனித்தமிழ்ச் சொற்கள் வழக்கொழிகின்றன. அதனால், தனித்தமிழ்ச்சொற்கள் மறைந்து, வடசொற்களே மக்கள் மனத்தில் இடம்பெறுகின்றன. பிற மொழிச் சொற்களை மிகுதியாகத் தமிழிற் கலந்தமையான் அருணகிரி நாதர் காலத்தில் இலக்கிய வளர்ச்சி குன்றியதாகவே கருதப்படும். ஆனால், சந்த அமைப்புப் பாடல்களைத் தோற்றுவித்தவர்களுள் அருணகிரி நாதர் சிறப்பாகக் குறிப்பிடத் தக்கவராவர்.

மிகுதியான தலபுராணங்கள் எழுந்த காலம் பத்தொன்பதாம் நூற்றாண்டேயாகும். பெரிய புராணத்தை அடிப்படையாக வைத்துக்கொண்டு தலங்களுக்குப் புராணங்கள்

பாடினார்களேயொழிய, புதிய முறையில் இலக்கிய வளர்ச்சியில் ஈடுபடவில்லை. ஆகவே, பெரியபுராணம், கம்பராமாயணம் போன்ற சிறந்த நூல்களும் இந்நூற்றாண்டில் எழவில்லை. சங்கநூற்பயிற்சி குறைந்தமையின் இத்தகைய தலபுராணங்கள் எழுவனவாயின. புதிய இலக்கியத் தோற்றத்திற்கு வழியில்லாமற் போய்விட்டது.

இருபதாம் நூற்றாண்டில் தனித்தமிழியக்கமும் சங்க இலக்கிய மறுமலர்ச்சியும் புத்துயிர் பெற்றுக் காவிரியின் கரையில் எழுவனவாயின. ஆதலின், சங்க இலக்கியங்களைப் போற்றுதலும், தனித்தமிழ் நடையில் சிறுகதைகள், நாவல்கள், நாடகங்கள், கவிதைகள், கட்டுரைகள் எழுதுதலும் இந்நூற்றாண்டில் காணப்படும் இலக்கிய மறுமலர்ச்சியாகும்.

காவிரியின் கரை கண்ட இலக்கியங்கள் எத்துணையோ! அவ்வளவும் நாம் காணும் பேறு பெற்றோமில்லை. காலத்தின் கோலத்தால் அழிந்துபட்டனவும் சில இருக்கலாம். அவற்றை ஈடு செய்வது போலப் புதிய இலக்கியங்களைப் படைத்துத் தமிழ் மொழிக்குத் தகைசான்ற தொண்டாற்றுவோமாக!

The Story of Kovalan[1]
CEYLON TAMIL VERSION

Translated by HUGH NEVILLE

[The story of Kannaki and Kovalan has appeared in different language versions in Southern India and Ceylon. The following Tamil version prevalent in the Eastern Province of Ceylon is taken from *The Taprobanian* (1887), a periodical published in the last century by Hugh Neville of the Ceylon Service, to promote Dravidian Studies. - Editor.]

This is the name of a very long ballad or group of ballads which recite, in Tamil, the story of Kannakai and Kovalan. Kannakai was the daughter of the Pandian king and a virgin incarnation of *Kali*. There is a prose version of the poem or saga, much read by Tamils of Ceylon and Madura, and the poem is recited at the ancient and prehistoric temple of Kannakai, near Mulativu, as well as at her later temple at Karativu, near Batticaloa. A Sinhalese version of it also exists, called the *Pattini haela* in which she is treated as an avatar of Parvati or Pattini, rather than of Kali. The worship of this goddess seems to have been that of the first Pandians, and to have been stopped arbitrarily by their kings shortly before the epoch of Kovalan and his bride, since deified. In Ceylon it was especially affected by the Tamils, the Karears and the Mukkuvars; the Vellalans merely tolerated or accepted the Kannakai worship, after its chief doctrines had already been mythicised by them

1. The Tamil spelling is Kōvalan ; I have not thought it necessary to mark this in the text throughout.

into their own goddesses, Amman and Mari Amman, who jointly fill up the place of Kannakai. The goddess herself is probably Venus Urania of the West, but we here deal only with the events of one supposed incarnation.

The reader will do well to remember that the great feature of these anthropomorphic myths, is their historical reality. As a rule each event is correctly given, when denuded of the usual extravagance of expression, and the deification was accorded because the human life seemed to prove a divine pre-existence in harmony with it. The human life was not a fiction made to harmonise with a divine pre-existence, for the multitude of such incarnations or deifications rendered the invention of a new one quite superfluous.

Kovalan is in Sinhalese called Palava Guru, and the facts really seem briefly to have been these:

The King of Pandi discarded a daughter at her birth from superstitious motives.

The child was rescued and adopted by a wealthy and powerful Palava or Setti, noble of the Vaisya caste, living on the coast, and owning a large trading fleet.

She was betrothed to his grandson, a very wealthy Palava noble, who lived a life of debauchery at Tirukadur.

Notwithstanding her great beauty, vast wealth and illustrious birth, the Palava debauchee, to the wonder of his countrymen, refused to complete his marriage, and remained under the absolute and exclusive control of a nautch girl.

Subsequently he was suspected of an intrigue with the Pandian queen, and executed at Madura.

His neglected wife, then avenged his death, burning Madura, and taking a terrible revenge upon the Pandian king, her own unnatural father.

The public mind seems to have been greatly impressed by this romantic and tragic history, and to have traced its origin to the Pandian king's stern suppression of Kali worship at Madura. The next step was to the local mind scarcely even a step, and the author of the king's punishment was at once identified as a human incarnation of the goddess, whose worship had been suppressed.

It then became necessary to explain the conduct of Kovalan, which seemed at first sight a cruel slight to the incarnate goddess.

In after years, Palava influences possibly led to his being further honoured, that the worship of the goddess might be tolerated by the powerful dynasty of his race. At the same time popular condemnation of child marriage was insidiously encouraged, by the extreme prominence given to the fact, that all troubles happened, owing to Kovalan's marriage with an infant.

Whether Kovalan or Kopalan was himself a king of the Palas or Palavas, shall be considered again, in another article, when further materials are before the reader. It will be well to bear in mind, however, that as Kopalan, or as Palava Guru, his title may be really the King Pala, or Pala King. His name in Tamil is written Kovalan.

The epithet Setti is possibly a modern addition to the family name of Kovalan, and due to the fact that in later times the great Vaisya merchants, owners of ships, were of Setti caste. In any case it denotes a

Vaisya merchant, and not the Setti caste of to-day, in which the name has a quite restricted sense.

I will now give a resume of the story, and then append such notes as seem desirable to clear up, or emphasize, important points in the history.

Invocation :

This invokes the aid of Munthu Vinayakar, the son of Mukkanavar, of Arumukavalar, son-in-law of Atchuttan, of Pokkasar Minatchi, who lives in the flower groves of Madura, of Adi-narayanan, who sleeps upon the fig-leaf, and of Saraswati, the wife of Maraiyavanar. These gods and goddesses are called upon to aid the author sing the traditions of Kovalan.

Introduction :

In ancient times, long ago, there were two brothers-in-law, Manakan Setti, and Masottan setti, who owned great fleets. Their ships numbered 400,000, in which they carried gold, rice, pepper and other merchandise, thereby amassing vast treasure. They themselves lived in Madura, with great wealth and luxury. Manakan Setti had a son, named Mutu Setti, who was unhappily childless. He therefore, performed severe penance in honour of Sokkalingam, and planted flower groves along the banks of the river and near the tank, all of which he dedicated to the god. At times the celestial cow Kama-denu, so great was his meritorious devotion, would descend from Kayilasam by a ladder of ropes, and graze near the tank in the meadows scattered among the groves planted there. She would graze there, quench her thirst at the lotus tank, and praising Mutu Setti for his devotion, she would return to heaven. He however, knew nothing of this.

It happened one day that her calf came with her, descending the ladder from Kayilasam, and drank water with its mother. As they were ascending together, up the ladder, Mutu Setti saw them, and thinking some of the cattle from the folds had broken in and damaged his young plantations, he slung a stone at the retreating cow and calf. Alas! the stone struck the calf and ended its life.

The celestial cow curses Mutu Setti:

The celestial cow Kama-denu, seeing her calf killed, turned and cursed the man who thus bereaved her. She said, "As you have killed my child in its sixteenth year, so may your son die too in his sixteenth year." Uttering this terrible curse the cow disappeared into Kayilasam.

Mutu Setti deeply grieved, renewed with even greater insistance, his austerities and prayers, until at length the god Sokkalingam promised that he would have a son.

Maniarasan's son makes a vow to Kali:

In those days there lived at Madura a certain oil merchant, named Maniarasan, who had two wives. By the first wife he was blessed with three children, and by the second wife with one. Being about to die, he called his children to his death-bed, and divided the property between them, giving one half to the children of the first wife, and one half to the child of the second wife.

Now the son of the second wife began to trade in oil, but though he went daily into the town, he never could meet with a purchaser. In his distress he made a vow to Kali, that if only he could sell every drop of his oil, he would light one thousand lamps in her temple to her honour,

This however was a rash vow, for the Pandian king had issued a strict edict, that no one should light lamps at the Kali temple, under penalty of instant death.

Strange to say, on the very next day the oil merchant sold his whole stock, and in accordance with his vow, lit one thousand lamps in the temple of Kali, and went to his home.

The king, however, happened to be in the upper part of the palace and thence saw with indignation the lights at the temple. He therefore, sent out the watch to bring the daring offender before him. The step-brothers of the merchant, who were jealous of his fortune, then pointed him out to the watch, as the guilty one. He was taken before the Council of Six Thousand, and there condemned to be cut into pieces in front of the temple of Kali, for disobedience to the king's order.

The death of the oil merchant, and his wife:

The executioner instantly took him away to the scene of execution, and there, in front of the temple of Kali, cut off his head. Wondrous! the head fell upon the bosom of the goddess, and resting itself there, cried out to her, "Amma! evil is returned for good." The goddess consoled it and promised vengeance. Meanwhile her husband's death became known to the oil merchant's wife, Mayilanaiyal, [1] who put an end to her own life upon the same spot.

Sokkalingam, however, observed these deeds, and preserved the lives of the oil merchant and of his wife in a golden casket.

Kali then presented herself to Sokkalingam, and told him that she wished to become the wife of

1 Mayilanaiyal is perhaps only an epithet, "beautiful", and not a proper name.

Kovalan Setti in her next incarnation, in order that she might destroy all the Pandians before she resumed her own form.

Sokkalingam therefore, took the life of Kali and preserved that also in a golden casket.

Birth of Kovalan, Kannakai and Mataki:

Afterwards Sokkalingam took the oil-merchant's life and sent him to be born as the son of Varna-malai, the wife of Mutu Setti, and on an auspicious day caused him to be named Kovalan, so intimating that he was as beautiful as Sokkalingam himself.

Now in those days, the Pandian King and his wife were undergoing great penance, living in austerity upon a certain mountain, and praying that a child might be born to them. Sokkalingam therefore, changed the life of Kali into a lime fruit, and gave it to Kovilingi, the Pandian Queen.

After she had eaten this lime fruit, it came to pass that when ten months had fully elapsed, a child was born to her. It was a daughter, and wonderful to tell, upon the babe's right leg, at birth, was a golden bangle, and upon her left leg amulet, and around her neck was a garland of flowers.

Such a strange prodigy betokened wonderful events, and the king summoned his astrologers to draw up the child's horoscope, and explain what these miraculous signs might betoken. The astrologers then considered, and announced that as the babe was born with a flower garland around its neck, Madura would cease to prosper, and if she should cry, both north and south Madura would be in flames. They therefore advised the king, that the child should be enclosed in a coffer, and sent adrift on the river Vaigai.

Then queen Kovilingi, the child's mother, herself filled a golden cup with milk, and putting it beside the child, ordered her maid to take it before the king. The king then placed the child in a coffer, sealed it, and sent it adrift down the river.

Now it chanced that as the coffer drifted here and there with the current, that a five-hooded cobra saw it, and lodged itself upon the lid. They drifted ashore at Kaveri-pum-pattinam, and there the nakam opening the box, and seeing the babe, took the gem that was concealed in its own head, and fixed it in the bangle of the child, recognising that it was no one else but Kali. It then floated the coffer again, with the child in it, after giving her the name of Kannakai.

As the box was thus a second time afloat, Manakan Setti and Masottan Setti espied it, and took it ashore, and each claimed it as his own. When they opened it and found the child, Manakan Setti took her to his own home, and adopted her as his own daughter.

About the same time it also happened that one Vasanta-malai was performing penance at the sacred shrine of Thirukadur, and praying Sokkalingam for a child. The god granted her prayers, and changing the life of Mayilanaiyal, the oil-merchant's wife, into a lime fruit, he gave that fruit to Vasanta-malai. When ten months had gone by from the time she ate it, a daughter was born to her. She threrefore sent for the astrologers to draw up the child's horoscope. The astrologers named the child Mataki, and foretold that as she grew up she would be the most wonderful of dancers, and at her tenth year would dance publicly in a great assembly, and that a Setti named Kovalan would there see her, love her, and live with her for twelve years, and in the thirteenth year she would die.

Marriage of Kovalan and Kannakai:

When Kannakai began to grow into girl hood very many were the proposals of marriage made to her parents for her. She was asked in marriage by Masottan Setti's son, and by Kovalan, and by very many other illustrious or wealthy youths. Great was the surprise when Manakan Setti's son, Mutu Setti, invited Masottan Setti and others to the marriage of his son Kovalan. Masottan Setti hastened to ask who was to be the bride, and on hearing it was Kannakai, he grew very angry, and after with a serious quarrel with Mutu Setti, he sought out Manakan Setti, and upbraided him with his breach of faith, reminding him that he had already promised Kannakai to his son. So great was the quarrel, that night but a timely appeal to arbitration, saved the most serious consequences. The arbitrators decided that the rivals should cast lots, which was agreed to, and Kovalan became the winner. He then bound the marriage tali or necklet round the girl's neck, with all due ceremony, and she became his betrothed wife

Kovalan then requested that the festival should be completed as usual with a grand nautch.

Mataki dances a nautch, and captivates Kovalan:

When Kovalan demanded the usual nautch dance in honour of his marriage, Masottan Setti and those of his friends and relations who knew his horoscope, raised objections. Above all they dreaded his seeing Mataki, whose grace and beauty were already of wide repute, and whose charms were reported to be irresistible. His horoscope announced great danger about this time, which should reach him through a dancing girl. Masottan Setti, Manakan Setti and the other friends by their opposition served only to increase the insistance of Kovalan, who now requested

Mataki should be sent for as the dancer, declaring that on their refusal, he would commit suicide. They then withdrew all further opposition, clearly perceiving the hand of destiny was in this wish. When their invitation reached Vasanta-malai, her joy and pride knew no limits, and she agreed to send her daughter Mataki to perform the wedding nautch. She then called up her daughter and gave her the invitation. Mataki thereupon dressed herself in her richest brocaded silk, with all kinds of jewels, and asked her mother's leave to depart. Her mother now gave her as a parting gift some betel leaves, some betel nut, and a small vial of oil. The properties of these she explained were magical and she enjoined her to spread some of the oil upon the betel leaves, and to give it to be chewed by any man she desired should love her. Such was the power of the oil, that whosoever should taste, would thence-forth find it impossible to live apart from her. Mataki thus armed, set out for Kaveri-pum-pattinam on elephant back, with a rich retinue of musicians. Upon her arrival the Setti enquired her terms for dancing, to which she replied that all the terms she asked, was, that when she threw the gold necklace, which she wore at her birth, the man upon whom it might fall should become hers. They consented, but they craftily kept Kovalan in another room, at the door of which his mother kept watch. Hearing the music he asked to let him enter to see the nautch, and when he threatened her with suicide, she gave way. He then dressed himself in his richest clothes, and jewels, and sat upon one of the seats. No sooner had she set eyes on him, than the dancing girl meditating on Sokkalingam and invoking his aid, threw her necklet, and it fell over the head of Kovalan and encircled his neck. Mataki now claimed him as her lover, and

asked what presents he would give her. He gave incalculable presents to her. She then told him he might now take off her necklet and release himself. He tried and failed, and not even with knives could the necklet be separated from his neck. Then Mataki advancing, laughed at him, and said, "If you cannot take off my necklet, eat a little of my betel." He ate, and then at once went away, following her. In vain his father and others implored and begged him to consider his conduct, and not desert his wife and all his family, for the sake of a dancing girl. He replied, "I have no wife, no relations, and Mataki is all to me." Then they recognized fate, and ceased to resist, and he and Mataki went away together, riding upon an elephant, and came to the Amarkundi Iswaran temple, where Mataki swore by the palipidam (altar) itself, that she whould never love any other but Kovalan. Kovalan too swore thereon never to love any other but Mataki. When they reached the home of Mataki she bade him be seated upon a bed; then one of the legs broke and he fell upon the floor. She then told him she had no other bed, and he must now replace it. While she cooked their food, he sent an urgent letter to his father, asking for 12 ship loads of money and necessaries.

Kovalan squanders his fortune:

Manakan Setti did as requested and despatched to his son twelve vessels laden with rice, pepper, and other cargo, and these ships safely arrived at their destination. Kovalan hearing this, went to the harbour and met them. He unloaded and landed the goods with the utmost expedition, and then realising what price he could, took the whole of the money to Mataki, and asked what she wished to be done with it. She then asked for

twelve kawnies of rice land, and many cattle, and several large mansions, and money for her table expenses, and for the expenses of her musicians, and for her mother, and for rich brocades and silken cloths, and for jewels, and for their mutual enjoyments. Kovalan therefore gave her all that she desired though he lavished all his wealth in gratifying her caprices. In this degrading idleness he lived for twelve years.

Kannakai grows up:

When Kannakai reached her seventeenth year, she one day told her maid to procure a mirror. While she was admiring her own beauty in this mirror she noticed her marriage tali (necklet), and asked why she wore it. On learning that it was tied in proof of her betrothal, she asked who the man might be, and where he then was. Her maids replied that her mother-in-law should be asked to tell her this.

Kannakai visits her mother-in-law:

Kannakai now sought an interview with her mother-in-law, who received her with great ceremony and offered her a seat. Kannakai then asked who was her betrothed husband, and where were his warehouses. Her mother-in-law then told her that he was living in the house of a dancing girl.

Kannakai asked how long he had been living there, and on learning that it was for twelve years, that he had lived with Mataki at Tirukadur, she asked why his mother had not called him away. His mother then told her that merchants of their rank would no longer respect them, if they received back a man who had fallen in love with a dancing girl, and devoted himself to her. She entreated the young wife to try and recall him to his duty.

Kannakai writes to Kovlan:

Kannakai considered this advice, and then wrote to Kovalan, saying, "Oh husband, who tied the wedding tali on my neck at my fifth year, and ever since lived in the house of a dancing girl, I am now about to die. I wish before I die to receive from your hands a little water, and that you should then perform my funeral rites, and remove my tali; then you can return again to your Mataki."

She sent this letter through some of her maids, with strict injunction to give it privately to her husband. The maids reached Tirukadur, and finding Kovalan engaged in worship of Sokkalingam at the Settimoku temple, they gave him the letter.

Kovalan receives the letter:

When Kovalan read this letter, he bitterly reproached himself with his cruel neglect, and shed tears of sorrow; he then went to bid Mataki farewell, and when she saw that he had been weeping, she asked the reason. He told her that his wife Kannakai was dead, and he was summoned to perform the funeral ceremonies over her. He added that he could not refuse to do this, or he would be scorned and despised by all who knew him, and expelled from his family.

Mataki, however, was greatly grieved, asking whether Kannakai was more beautiful than she, and demanding what fault she had committed that he should discard her after their twelve years of happiness.

Kovalan, however, vowed to love her as before, and to return after the funeral ceremonies were completed, and the tali removed from his wife's neck.

—to be contd.

News and Notes

NEHRU'S ASSURANCE TO NON-HINDI AREAS

Prime Minister Nehru was replying to a correspondent at the Press conference whether English was going to be given the status of an official language after 1965 and would continue to be so indefinitely till a change was demanded by non-Hindi-speaking areas.

Mr. Nehru replied a decision had been taken by the Government some years ago and it was also annonced that English should continue even though Hindi might be the principal official language.

On the question of medium of instruction at the University stage, Mr. Nehru said he favoured a 'dual medium' for some time by which some subjects, like history, might be taught in regional language and technical and scientific subjects could be taught in the English medium.

As regards schools, he said what was being done was that Hindi or the regional language was the medium of instruction while English was being taught as a compulsory subject.

WORTH TAKING RISK

Asked to comment on the opposition to the retention of English as an associate official language expressed at the All-India Language Convention held in Delhi recently, Mr. Nehru said he did not agree with that view. He believed that English was necessary for the development of Indian languages including Hindi.

He said: "English is a foreign language and foreign languages are necessary. English is a foreign language which is better known than others and is necessary because it will strengthen our languages, the ideas and even the words strengthen them. There is a slight risk that English, being continued as an associate language, tends to delay a little its substitution by Hindi. That risk is worth taking because the foundations will be firmly laid."

Mr. Nehru recalled the assurances given by him and by the then Home Minister, Pandit Pant, two or three years ago on the status of English after 1965, and said these assurances had been repeated in the Presidential order.

"Parliament", he said, "was informed of it, and presumably agreed to it, that we ought to have English as an associate language. The assurance was welcomed at many places, especially in the South. *We thought it was enough, but now we think it would be better to embody it (assurance) in an Act.*

"*Apart from other reasons, we cannot go back on the pledge we have given.* But I think from the point of view purely of the development of our own languages, it is very necessary for our minds to be opened to foreign languages to literature, ideas and the like."

COMPULSORY SUBJECT

Mr. Nehru said, "We have a tendency in India -- I suppose in other countries too—of going back to our shell. The shell is wide enough and big enough admittedly, but it is a shell at the same. It is necessary to come out of it."

A correspondent suggested that the present trend in regard to medium of instruction in schools appeared

to be to go back to English and asked for the Prime Minister's comment.

Mr. Nehru replied, "We do want English in schools, not as a medium but as a compulsory subject." He did not recommend English being made the medium of instruction in schools. The medium should be the regional language or Hindi, but English should be a compulsory subject. "That is the decision we have arrived at." —Hindu, PTL., Aug. 14, 1962.

CZECH TAMIL SCHOLAR FELICITATED

Dr. Kamil Zvelebil, the Tamil scholar from Czechoslovakia, was felicitated at a function held under the auspices of the Maraimalai Adigal library on September 14. Dr. Kamil Zvelebil, in his reply said Tamil could be the medium for any subject, including chemistry, medicine and technology. Dr. A. C. Chettiar presided over the function and Mr. V. Subbiah Pillai welcomed the gathering.

—Hindu, 16-2-1962

HINDU INFLUENCES IN S. E. ASIA

Doctor Jean Filliozat of the Institute of Indology, Pondicherry, told me he was working particularly on *Saiva Agamas*. He said 28 of them were known to exist, but only 21 were available. As a result of his work, the Institute had brought out the *Raurava* and *Mrugendra* Agamas and also the French rendering of *Tiruvilayadal Puranam*. Hindu influences were manifest in the South East Asian countries. Inscriptions found in those countries were in Sankrit and even the Dravidian culture, which went to those places, appeared to have spread through the medium of Sanskrit and this showed that Sanskrit must have been the language of communication in a vast region of the world in the bygone centuries.

Dr. Filliozat said that the UNESCO have called an international conference in New Delhi in November this year to discuss measures for promoting understanding between the cultures of the East and the West. —Hindu, 16-9-62.

HISTORICAL TAMIL DICTIONARY

The preparation of a historical Tamil dictionary at a cost of Rs. 15 lakhs was recommended on Wednesday to the State Government by the Tamil Development and Research Council.

The Council requested the Government to settle the details of the scheme and determine the agency to which the work should be entrusted in consultation with the Madras and Annamalai Universities.

Mr. M. Bhaktavatsalam, Education Minister, and Chairman of the Council presided.

The Council reviewed the progress made in the preparation of children's literature. It considered a report on the preparation of further volumes of the bibliography on Tamil books. The first volume covering the period 1867-1900 has already been published. It was decided to bring out the second volume covering 1901 to 1910. As regards the period 1910 to 1957, the Council felt that one volume could be published for every five year period. It was pointed out that the National Libarary of Calcutta was preparing a systematic bibliography of Tamil books published after 1957.

The reports on the progress of the introduction of Tamil as official language in Government offices and the work of the Bureau of Tamil Publications relating to publication of Tamil text books for college students were also considered by the Council.

—Indian Express, Octobor 26, 1962.

NATIONAL UNITY

DHARWAR, Oct. 25—Sardar K. M. Panikkar, Vice-Chancellor, Jammu and Kashmir University, said here to-day that to talk of integration in India, a plural society, was 'absurd and meaningless'. In a plural society, a society of different religions, ethnic groups, languages, etc., what was required, he stressed, was understanding, appreciation and tolerance and not 'integration' communities and religions, he observed, could not be integrated; they could live in a spirit of amity, understanding and appreciation,

Sardar Panikkar, who was delivering the convocation address of the Karnatak University, felt that committees, conferences, seminars and programmes on integration, emotional or other verged on the absurd and were a little mischievous. India was, without any doubt, an integrated nation, as much as any other nation in the world, he declared.

He said that those who talked of our lack of national integration complained about the existence of casteism, regionalism and groupism. The accusers of casteism, he pointed out, were almost always representatives of castes, who in the past had enjoyed in their areas a monopoly of political power and now found that under a democracy based on adult franchise other communities, who had so far been deprived of social influence and political power, were challenging them. The rise of 'lower castes' to political power as a result of the democratic processes, he felt, was the most welcome feature in India's democracy.

REGIONALISM

About regionalism, he said, there was no need to get alarmed. The system of federation itself, he underscored, was based on the validity of regional

personality. In a territory, as large as India, with its regions larger than many great States, with its local histories buried deep in tradition, national unity could only be based on the recognition of regional interests. Especially was it true in democracies where political representation had necessarily to have a local basis. In an autocracy or dictatorship, regionalism could be put down with a heavy hand. But, regionalism, he opined, was an essential and necessary feature of democratic States. Even quite small States like Switzerland demonstrated how strong was the feeling for the region in democratic States.

Sardar Panikkar also said there was nothing wrong with the existence of groupism which was stated to be eating into the vitals of the Congress organisation. Groupism, he pointed out, was the attempt of people outside the area of power to act together to make their ideas and opinions felt on those in authority. He believed that a party's dynamism was strengthened through its groups.

NO FALL IN EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS

Sardar Panikkar doubted very much whether there was now a deterioration of standards. All talk about the fall in standards, he felt, came from people whose judgments were still based on the accent with which English was spoken or the facility with which it was written. In subjects like physics, chemistry and botany, and economics, history and mathematics, he had no doubt, there was a notable improvement in standards. However, he emphasised that there was need for their further improvement.

—Hindu, October 26, 1962.

A 50,000-YEAR-OLD CIVILISATION

ROME

A civilisation even older than that of the great Hittite Empire which flourished about 4,000 years ago has been partially unravelled thanks to the efforts of an Italian archaeological team excavating in Turkey.

This civilisation, which is believed to have had its hey-day round about 3,000 B.C., was located in Malatya. Ancient Malatya has been identified to the north of the Taurus Mountains not far from the Euphrates, with the hill named Arslan Tepe, which is about 10 kilometres from the modern city.

The following, according to Savatino Moscati, Professor of Semitic Philology at Rome University, a member of the team, are the findings of the excavating party: The great Hittite empire sprang up in the heart of Turkey around 4,000 years ago. It soon spread beyond the limits of that country and began to compete with the other leading countries of those times, Egypt and Mesopotamia.

After several centuries, the empire was defeated by an invasion from the sea, but the Hittites survived for some time in some small States which preserved their lauguage and culture. Malatya is one of these States and the city of Malatya was a powerful and flourishing one. The monumental city gate proves this, and the remains of the powerful and floursning defence bastions are gradually also being revealed.

An invasion and a fire, an event proved by a thick layer of ash, brought those ancient fortifications down; others arose on the same site and were destroyed to be replaced by yet others. The last of those was a

formidable wall as much as six metres in depth. But not even this defence system was sufficient to save Malatya from final ruin. Those who visit the site today see stones which are of a slightly ruddy hue, touched with gold—traces left by the fire kindled in the defeated city by the Assyrian armies.

For a good 30 metres down, from the top of the hill to its base, there are remains of the successive generations of inhabitants. It was thus discovered that Malatya existed even before the Hittite Empire was founded, at least 5,000 years ago. That was the time when, on the opposite side of Turkey, the fortified citadel of Troy was building its topless towers.

The finding of certain seals, with the names of officials and rulers makes it possible to set a date to the various phases of the ancient city's history. A fine head in white limestone with a serene and thoughtful expression is supposed to be that of one of the Kings of Malatya and, if this theory is correct, the remains of a building of huge stone blocks may indicate the site of the royal palace—NAFEN.

Hindu, October, 27, 1962

SANSKRIT & TAMIL

The views of Dr. J. Filliozat, the internationally reputed French Indologist:

Q: What about Tamil ? There is a view in some quarters that Tamil has had an autonomous growth and culture too.

A : Tamil is an exception to what I remarked about the languages vis-a-vis Sanskrit. The exception is very interesting. It is true that Tamil grew without depending on Sanskrit and developed a splendid literature of its own which sometimes surpasses similar texts in Sanskrit. But the Tamil culture has also

imbibed much from the Sanskrit language and the Brahminical tradition. which grew around it in the North. Let me illustrate.

Tamil was well developed, in grammar and literature, when Sanskrit came to South. Excavations in Virampatnam-Arikamedu, near Pondicherry, have given us inscriptions in the Brahmi script in Tamil and in Prakrit. The inscriptions date back to the first century A.D. and Sanskrit inscriptions appear only later. It is, therefore, obvious that Sanskrit was not yet adopted by the Tamils. That does not mean there was no knowledge of Sanskrit at all before the Christian era in Tamil Nad. Even in the times of Megasthenes, the Greek envoy, and later during Asoka's rule, there was cordial intercourse between the north and the southern kingdoms. Sangam Literature bears evidence of a knowledge of Prakrit. If the Vedas adored the Rain God as man's acceptance of a Cosmic Norm, *Kural* in Tamil, in its second chapter itself sang the glory of rain in regulating the life of man. There was a good deal of similarity of views on moral values, though the emphasis varied.

Q: So, there was, before the Christian era, healthy relationship between the South and the North and their languages. But did they not get assimilated?

A: Of course, the assimilation started, but at a later period, when Sanskrit became the *lingua franca* of India. The Tamil genius took it constructively. It was able to do so for the simple reason that Tamil was developed and had nothing to fear in the process. Such a synthesis agreed with the culture of the Tamils to take the best in anything. Moreover, Sanskrit helped them in their commercial and cultural enterprises. A major development in this field was in the growth of devotional literature which appeared in Sanskrit in

Tamil Nad. The illustrious Sankara and Ramanuja and a host of other philosophers, devotees and seers studied Sanskrit so that their philosophical quests united the hearts of millions in India. As I had said elsewhere, Sankara and Ramanuja may be called 'Sanskritising Dravidians' a phrase which would help us to understand the reaction of the Tamils to Sanskrit. Even to this day, Sanskrit words and ideas have intermingled with Tamil.

Q: You are perhaps aware of a view in certain quarters in Tamil Nad that Tamil must be purified?

A: Yes, Some years ago, I addressed a meeting at Madras, when I dwelt on the antiquity of Tamil. The next morning some journals came out quoting me (wrongly of course) that even a foreigner like me had endorsed that Tamil was the oldest language in the country and that Sanskrit was an intruder. But let me point out that even the so-called puritans use Sanskrit words in their slogans against Sanskrit! Tamil is a growing language, and attempts to enrich it always deserve praise. But if 'Purification' is in any way based on the idea that Sanskrit is alien to Tamil culture, no statement could be more absurd. Lurking behind such moves are the 'racial myth' which is long discarded not only in India but in Europe as well.

—Hindu, November 18, 1962

A Short Note on Parankunru

K. PARAMASIVAN, M. A.

" Sambandar has a poem on Parankunru but he has nothing to say about the presence of Muruga in this hill as do Murugarruppadai and Paripadal. The Muruga's shrine must have been built after A. D. 650," says the late Mr. S. Vaiyapuri Pillai in his 'History of Tamil Language and Literature' (p. 113). He does not stop with this but proceeds further to draw conclusions from this assumption. He says, "In the eleventh Tirumurai, Tirumurugarruppadai is included and we would be perfectly justified in dating this poem and its author to about A. D. 700" (p. 113), his reason being that the above poem refers to Parankunru as one of the ' Six holy camps ' of Muruga.

But Saint Sambandar himself refers to the six holy places in another place:

"Amartarum kumaravēl tādaiūr ārinār"[1]

Evidently Parankunru was one of the six. And just because he does not refer to Muruga in his poem on this place, we cannot prove the nonexistence of His shrine in his period.

Long before Sambandar, Madurai Marudan Ila Nāgaṉār has stated in one of his poems in Ahanānūru that the poet Anduvan has sung in praise of the Parankunru hill of Muruga, the Lord with the shining spear who routed out the Sūra;

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1. " அமர்தரும் குமரவேள் தாதையூர் ஆறினார் " (3-35-6)

"Sūr marungu arutta sudar ilai neduvēl
Sinam migu Murugan tan Parankunrattu
Anduvan pādiya sandu kelu nedu varai"[1]

We cannot presume that the learned Mr. Pillai was unaware of the above poem. In fact, he refers to the name Anduvan (occurring in this poem) in earlier chapter, where he tries to differentiate the Nallanduvanār of Paripādal from the namesake of Ahanānuru (in order to bring down the period of the former by a few centuries). There he argues, that, as the author of the poem No. 43 (in Ahānāṇūru) is known with the adjunct 'Madurai āsiriyar' and as the name Anduvan alone occurs in poem No. 59, Nallanduvanār figuring in Paripādal cannot be identified with either of these two (p. 29). We do not propose here to inquire into this identity or otherwise.[2] For our purpose, it suffices to say that Mr. Pillai has noted the occurrence of the name Anduvan in Aham 59. Even if we accept that the Anduvaṇ of Ahānānūru lived a few centuries earlier than the Nallanduvanār of Paripādal, the Muruga's shrine must have existed at that earlier period.

Another poem in the same anthology gives a good description of Parankunru as if to clear away any doubt from our minds as to the identity of the place. The poet Erukkāttūr Tāyankannanār says that the holy place of Muruga is situated west of Madurai and that celebrations are going on there without any break:

1. "சூர்மருங்கு அறுத்த சுடர்இலை நெடுவேல்
சினம்மிகு முருகன் தண்பரங் குன்றத்து
அந்துவன் பாடிய சந்துகெழு நெடுவரை" (59)

2. However it may be pointed out that the Nallanduvaṇar of Paripadal is also known with the adjunct 'asiriyar' and out of his four poems in that anthology three deal with the river Vaiyai and the fourth with Muruga (Sevvel) of Parankuṇru, all of which go to prove his connection with Madurai.

" Kodi nudangu maruhin Kūdai Kudādu
pal pori maññai vel kodi uyariya
odiyā vilavin nediyōn kunrattu "[1]

From all these it will be seen that the attempt to bring down the age of the Muruga's shrine in Parankunru (in order to bring down the ages of some anthologies) is hardly convincing.

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1. "கொடிநுடங்கு மறுகின் கூடல் குடாஅது
பல்பொறி மஞ்ஞை வெல்கொடி உயரிய
ஒடியா விழவின் நெடியோன் குன்றத்து" (அகம். 149)

Book Reviews

N. VĀNAMĀMALAI, Tamilnāṭṭup pāmarap pāṭalkal (The Folksongs of Tamilnad), gathered by S.S. Pōttaiyā and S. M. Kārkki, N. C. P. S. Private Ltd., Madras, 1960, pp. 157+VIII, Price Rs. 3.—*Reviewed by Kamil Zvelebil.*

More and more attention is fortunately being dedicated to Tamil folk poetry. Writers and scholars like K. V. Jagannathan, S. Vittiyananthan, M. Ramalingam and others, and journals like Saraswathi or Thamarai are heralding new era of extensive gathering, broad collation and serious study of Tamil folksongs and other kinds of literary output generally as folklore.

The present work of Professor Vānamāmalai is without doubt one of the best attempts in this field. N. Vanamamalai is certainly not a newcomer; on the contrary, he belongs to the most ardent and patient students of all forms of Tamil folklore, and also he is one of those who really know it and who may be always most profitably consulted with regard to its many questions—be it the different kinds of 'bow-song' *(vil pāṭṭu)* or the dramatic *palluppaṭṭu*, or historical ballad on Kattapomman, or just short lyrical pieces, love-songs, lullabies etc. In addition to this broad knowledge Vanamamalai is armed with a sound method and correct theory of approach to folk literature, as he has proved in his numerous contributions which have appeared in different progressive Tamil journals, and now again in the Introduction to his book (pp. 1—12).

In this introduction he starts with the correct assumption of fundamental realism of folk poetry and says that Tamil folksongs are reflecting truly and realistically even if in an artistic way the life of the people, mainly of the working classes. He then proceeds to show the "class-affiliation" of this folk literature (comparing e. g. the lullaby of an upper class mother, obviously a rich farmer's wife, with the cradle song of a Palli—the pallar are a low peasant caste). Folk songs are not the creations of neutral, bloodless and shadowy literators; they are lively comments on almost every aspect of life, including the political history of the country (see ballads and songs about Raja Tej Singh, about Kattapomman, Marudu Brothers etc.)

In the present collection Vanamamalai has compiled almost exclusively those folksongs gathered in Vilāttikulam division of the Kōvilpaṭṭi Taluq (Tinnevelly) in the southernmost part of Tamilnad, current among field-labourers on the *puṇcey* (non-irriagated fields fit for dry cultivation) and on tea, cardamom and other plantations there.

Vanamamalai's introduction is closed by an appeal which should certainly be enthusiastically followed: that teachers, officials, trade-unionists and other educated people working in villages and on plantations should gather as much meterial as possible; today, with modern technical equipment of portable tape-recorders, this is surely not a difficult problem.

The Preface to the book was written by the late Sami Sidambaranar (he died on 17-1-1961) who tries to define folksongs *(nāṭṭuppāṭal)* as the literature of common people *(potujaña ilakkiyam)* which is anonymous, having been created by the people (mostly by working classes) for the people. He shows how, in

folksongs, old traditions, reminiscences of old customs and beliefs mingle with the new, with most modern ideas and concepts; he also shows how beautiful the images sometimes are, and how the folksongs, provided they are taken down carefully, offer rich dialectological meterial.

The text itself is divided into 7 chapters, dealing with cradle songs and songs accompanying childern's plays (pp. 13—38), songs about work or accompanying various labours and activities (pp. 39—64), love-songs (64—106), songs concerning different social topics (like widowhood, caste, drunkenness, pp. 107-126), songs concerning family life (pp, 127—135), songs describing one's village and country (139—146) and finally a mixture of various topics like the song of a washerwoman, the dialogue of an old man and an old woman about the aeroplane, a song about the train etc. (pp. 149—157). About 120 folksongs have been gathered here and commented upon. I firmly believe that the present book is only the volume, and that it will be soon followed by successive volumes from the pen of its author.

A. M. PJATIGORSKIJ, S. G. RUDIN, Tamil'sko-russkij slovar' (A Tamil-Russian Dictionary), edited by Purnam Somasundaram, with a short survey of Tamil grammatical system by *M. S. Andronov*, Gosudarstvennoe izdatel'stvo inostrannych i nacional' nych slovarej, Moskva, 1960, pp. 1384, Price *2.66 rubles.—Reviewed by K. Zvelebil.*

The publishing of this first Tamil-Russian Dictionary is undoubtedly an important event and an occasion for sincere joy. Before all, it is the first Tamil-Russian dictionary, and, at the same time, the first Tamil dictionary in a Slavonic language. As such it has not only its enormous intrinsic value

(especially for the steadily increasing number of Russian, Czech, Polish and other students and scholars studying Tamil), but it will certainly serve as one of the factors which are, from day to day, strengthening the ties between the Soviet people and the peoples of India. Second, it is indeed a very good dictionary, with many advantages and some important new features, and with only a limited number of minor imperfections.

The dictionary includes about *38,000 items*. According to the preface of the authors, it should be used when reading contemporary Tamil literature, belles-lettres as well as scientific and political prose, of the classical age. This is a modest understatement. I have tried to read some very ancient texts with its help, such as the *Purañāṉūru* (1.—3. cent. A. D.) and the *Cilappatikāram* (5.—6. cent. A. D.) and I have found the dictionary very useful. Prosodic and rhetoric terms, grammatical, astronomical and astrological expressions, as well as some basic terms from the field of medicine and from various technical branches are also included.

One of the most pleasing features is the fact that the diversity of the most important lexical meanings has been preserved through, and that the selection of basic meanings was done most carefully. The difficult problems concerning synonyms and homonyms were also tackled successfully.

Another important feature of the dictionary is the great number of idioms and the rich phraseological matter found on every page. Thus, e. g., under the item *kuṇṭi*, coll., the posteriors, buttocks, the following pharses are given: *kuṇṭi kaluva, kunti kaaya, kuṇṭikkup piṉṟê pēca, kuṇṭi maṇṇaittaṭṭiviṭṭu ōṭa, kuṇṭiyum vāyum pottikkoṇṭirukka, oruvaṉiṉ kuṇṭik koluppai*

aṭakka, kuṇṭi vaṟṟa. Here, one is probably entitled to see the strong influence of that old yet excellent work, the Tranquebar Dictionary. Compare, however, the item *mummuram*, vehemence, severity, fierceness (chosen at random), in the Tranquebar Dictionary with the same item in the work review: in Tranq. Dict., we have only one phrase: *mummuramāyirukka, mummuram paṇṇa*, whereas in the Tamil Russian Dictionary, we have *viyāti mummuramāyirukkiratu, mummuram paṇṇa, mummuramay irukka, vēlai mummuramaka naṭantukontiruntapotu.*

Very important are items concerning various spheres of modern life; most useful is the dictionary as far as the technical and scientific terminology is concerned. Thus we have, under the item *anu*, the following terms relating to its basic meaning as "atom": *anu aṭukku*, atomic pile, *anu āyutam*, atomic weapon, *anukkaru*, atomic nucleus, *anukkuntu*, atomic bomb, *anu cakti*, atomic energy, *anuccitaivu*, atomic fission, *anuppilattal*, the splitting of atomic nucleus.

The Russian equivalents for Tamil items are fully appropriate and their selection, as already mentioned, was done most carefully. Most paragraphs give the impression of well-balanced unity, compiled after long discussions and deep reflections. Let me quote as an example the item *vaṇakkam*; four fundamental meanings are given: (1) adoration; worship, veneration; (2) reverence, respect, esteem; (3) salute, greeting; (4) submis-sion, obedience. Under (3), the following phrases are given: *oruvanukku vanakattai terivikka, vanakkam celutta*, and *vanakkam*, as the most common greeting.

The survey of grammatical structure by M. S. Andronov is clear, lucid, and nearly fully satisfactory; especially the chapter on particles (pp. 1361-

1363) and the syntactical parts are very successful. Unfortunately, adjectives have been entirely omitted, or rather, ignored, as if they did not exist at all.

This conception has partly crept into the text of the dictionary, too. In spite of the fact that Tamil, like all Dravidian languages, has got quite a number of original adjective stems, the Tamil-Russian Dictionary follows sometimes, in this respect, the unfortunate practice of the Tamil Lexicon, which ignores adjectives as such with a stubborn consequentiality. Fortunately this is not always the case. Often the Tamil Russian Dictionary quotes adjectives (usually the secondary, derived adjectives) as adjectives, cf. "*ciriya* pril.", which means *ciriya*, adj., which is, however, in disagreement with the fact that Andronov in his short grammar does not speak about adjectives at all. To regard forms like *ce-*, red as derived from *cemmai*, redness, means surely to ignore all facts of historical development as well as the basic features of the structure of the language. The reverse is the truth; all abstract substantives in-*mai* are derivatives from adjectival and substantival (or even verbal) stems like *per,u*, *cir,u*, *ar,u*, *pac,u* etc.

This drawback, however, does not at all substantially diminish the excellence of the dictionary. On pp. 1278—1287, toponymics are given in very fair selection; we may find the items for weights and measures in a special appendix on pp. 1288—1291, the Indian monetary system on pp. 1292—1293, as well as the most important features of the calendar on pp. 1293—1296.

To conclude, the Tamil-Russian Dictionary of Pjatigorskij and Rudin ***is a monument of exceptional diligence, critical approach and sound knowledge of both the general problems of lexicography and the specific problems of the Tamil language. It is a***

dictionary which can hardly find its rival in the sphere of more recent Dravidan lexicography.

M. S. Andronov, Tamil'skij jazyk, (The Tamil Language), Izdatel'stvo vostocno) literatury, Moskva, 1960, pp. 72, *Price 3 rubles.*—Reviewed by *K. Zvelebil.*

Michail Sergeyevitch Androno has given in his articles (published in Soviet and Indian journals) much thought to some intricate problems of Tamil grammar, especially to those of the structure and functions of the Tamil verb. In his "Tamil Language" he abstains from quoting any of his daring theories and thought-provoking conclusions (with one slight exception on p. 46). This is natural: the present volume is one of the series of short descriptions of modern as well as of some important ancient languages of Asia and Africa (e. g. Arabic, Turkish, Pushtu, Hindi, Urdu, Telugu, Malayalam, Chinese, Tibetan, Tagalog, Swahili, Hausa, Pali, Avesta, Sanskrit etc.), a series entitled "Jazyki zarubeznogo Vostoka i Afriki".

In the introduction (pp. 7—12) Andronov gives some general data about the speakers of the language, about its place among Dravidan languages (quoting in this connection Hovelacque and accepting his view that Tamil is the most important of dravidan languages for the historical investigation of the family), about the periodization of Tamil; according to Andronov, the basis of literary Tamil is to be sought in the dialect of the "inner districts of Tamilnad" (Madura-Vaikai-Kuruvur-Maruvur); this is *centamil,* whereas *koṭuntamil* is a common term for the other local dialects; *centamil* was used as a language of poetry and prose and later became the literary language *par excellence;* as the language of modern prose it was formed in its basic features in the 14th—15th centuries (Nannūl). *koṭuntamil* became to be used in everyday

life during the entire Tamilnad including the territory where once *centamil* had been spoken.

This view is probably correct, though the explanation seems to be somewhat oversimplified. But as a working hypothesis for further investigation it may prove entirely valid.

It is not quite correct to say that "there is no scientific investigation" of the dialects (p. 9). The present book was ready for print in February 1960. The articles of K. Kanapathi Pillai (in IL, Turner Jubilee Vol. I, 1958), Susumu Kuno (in Gengo Kenkyu, 1958, 34). K. Zvelebil (in ArOr 1959) all appeared before the above mentioned date, not to speak about some older papers like J. Bloch's Castes et Dialects au Tamoul (in MSL de Paris 16 in 1910), R. P Sethu Pillai's contributions to the 10th and 15th All India Oriental Conference etc.

The rough division of Tamil dialects in five groups as given by Andronov on p. 9 may be accepted: the central group (Madura, Tirunelveli), the northern group (Madras), the eastern group (Tanjore), the western group (Coimbatore) and Ceylonese (Jaffna) Tamil (the southern group). It is also quite correct to draw a sharp dichotomy between Brahmin vs. Non-Brahmin Tamil. Andronov rightly stresses the social and cultural importance of the 'central' group of dialects (which are the 'direct descendants of *centamil*' (and of the 'northern' group which gained importance due to the fact that the economic and cultural prestige shifted from Madura to Madras.

On pp. 10—12, the author describes very briefly the history of Tamil philology.

pp. 13—21 are dedicated to Tamil graphemics and phonemics, (in the terms of the author, 'graphics'—

grafika, and 'phonetics'.) The statement that 'the sign *h*' (i. e. *āytam*) 'is used to express aspiration' *(pridychanie)* is most awkward (p. 14). The description of phonemes is brief and lucid, though the allophones are sometimes treated too shortly; some important allophones are omitted, as e. g. (ç), the allophone of /k/ in intervocalis position after /i/ and /e/ and especially before /i/, cf. *mika*, *ceykirēn* (miçʌ, sejçire:n). There are some minor mistakes such as to describe /ṭ/ before voiceless consonants and then give as example *kaṣṭam*.

Morphology is described on pp. 22—57. On the whole, this description is good clear and correct. Nevertheless I should like to offer one word of criticism. The treatment of adjectives is not only wholly insufficient, but unfortunately entirely unsatisfactory (p. 25). Andronov gives to adjectives (which undoubtedly do exist as an independent part of speech in Dravidian languages) two short paragraphs of 10 lines in all. He maintains that in the 'contemporary language there exists a very limited number of nouns which have lost the possibility to function independently and which are used only in the role of determination'; as examples he quotes such secondary adjectives as *periya*, *ciriya*, *ariya*, *paciya*, that is adjectives clearly derived from adjective roots *per-*, *cir-*, *pac-*, *ar-* by derivational suffixes; these adjectives had never the status of nouns in Tamil. Nouns like *per-u-mai* etc. are clearly derivations. Andronov follows in this respect the much criticized view of Bloch and the very unfortunate practice of Tamil Lexicon.

Perhaps I may venture to suggest at this occasion that the following system of the parts of speech (on the level of stems) may be accepted for Tamil:

1. Nouns (a) Substantives and Numerals;
   (b) Pronouns.
2. Adjectives (a) Pronominal Adjectives (such as *inta, anta*, and the preclitic *a-i-, ė-, u-*);
   (b) Adjectives Proper (such as *peru-, ciru-, aru-*).
3. Verbs.
4. Particles (i. e. idenclinables)
   (a) Adverbs (*ini, iṅku* etc.);
   (b) Particles Proper (*man, kol* etc.);
   (c) Clitics (as interrogative vowels or coordinator-*um*);
   (d) Interjections and onomatopoetic words.

This system is the result of discussions which I had with my Soviet colleagues, and the most important contribution toward it is due to J. J. Glazov and S. G. Rudin.

That Andronov himself was not very definitely convinced of his own solution may be seen from the fact that on p. 34 he speaks about *nanmai* as if it were derived from '*nal*-good' by the suffix-*mai* (which is synchronically and historically absolutely right), whereas on p. 32 when speaking about nouns in -*mai* in another connection he writes '*pēr*, large (from *perumai*, largeness).' We have since discussed this problem of the adjectives with the author and reached the conclusion that much has yet to be investigated both in the system as well as in the historical development before the final solution may be reached. I hope my friend Andronov will excuse my criticism of his views here.

Very interesting and perhaps utterly convincing is Andronov's explanation of the future of the Tamil

verb (p. 46, note 2). I should like to underline as correct and useful that Andronov dedicated due attention on echo-words (p. 57). Andronov deals with the passive (pp. 59—60) under Syntax, describing it as one of the many kinds of '*slovosocetanie*' (word-groups, word-combinations, union of words, i. e. phrases). There may be of course different opinion about this; one may perhaps regard (synchronically) the Tamil passive voice (in contemporary Tamil) as an organic part of the system of Tamil verb, and the opposition active: passive as something which is—as far as contemporary Tamil is concerned—fully within the system as a fundamental dichotomy of voices, and treat it consequently under Morphology.

On pp. 71—72, a very short example of Tamil text is given; it is a pity that the text is so very brief. In the vocabulary to that text, one misses the item *pōli*, a kind of bread or pastry.

One small suggestion concerning the bibliography: why to give only the date 1913 of the 3rd edition of Caldwell's Comparative Grammar—without even mentioning that it is the date of the 3rd edition—and not the dates of the first and second editions (1856, 1875)?

There are not a few misprints in the book, which is a pity; at random I quote: Zeigenbalg instead of Ziegenbalg (p. 11), Tamilica for Tamulica, elegantori instead of elegantori (ib.), *kukkaikkullē* for *kukaikkullē* (p. 42), *vanakkatait* instead of *vanakkattait* (p. 44), *appolutu, appotu, appo* while it should be *appolutu, appōtu, appō* (p. 53), *juram* instead of *jūram* (p. 53), dictiohary for dictionary (p. 73).

On the whole I suppose I am fully entitled to welcome this small yet important and well-written

introduction to Tamil as an indication of the fact that a new centre of Tamil studies has been founded at Moscow, with keen and diligent students; I am fully convinced that we may expect surprising and well-founded results in the future out of the pen of M. S. Andronov and other Soviet scholars in this field.

Sāmudrikā lakṣaṇam. Edited by T. N. SUBRAMANIAM. Madras Government Oriental Series, *No* CXXVI. Government Oriental Manuscript Library, Madras, 1959, pp. XLII + 50 + 131. Price Rs. 6-90.—Reviewed by *K. Zvelebil.*

The present volume contains the Tamil texts of *puruṣa latcaṇam* and *stiri latcaṇam*, both in verse and in prose, as well as the text of *nanti nūl* In the appendix. *makalir ilakkanam*, the 30th chapter of Kācikāndam, a work by Ativīrarāma Pāṇḍya (the author of the Tamil Kokkōkam) is given, as well as the Tamil version of *puruṣalakṣana* and *strilakṣana* of Varāhamihira's Bṛhatsamhitā.

These texts or most of them are examples of late expositions of the Indian schools of physiognomy and physical typology mixed with fortune-telling and sketches of palmistry. It is certainly an exaggeration to call this 'science', at least in that form in which the present texts expose it. These are rather very late and degenerated survivals of pre-scientific observations and experiences of primitive mankind; and the particular texts published in this volume do certainly not belong to the best which had been produced in this kind of literature As poetry they are poor; as systematic expositions of that rather questionable but interesting branch of human knowledge they do not bring anything new and worth study. Only those parts that renounce the fortune telling entirely and rather

simply describe purely physical aspects and psychological traits may be mildly interesting to a sexuologist or to a scholar studying comparative poetics and aesthetics. On the whole however, it may be said that the texts show a mixture of superficial observation of physical facts, a few clever remarks on human nature and a lot of nonsense, multiplied by the typical Indian passion of classification.

The English version and the Preface are both unsatisfying. One does not know : should the English text be a translation or a sort of commentary on the Tamil version—or both ? I am afraid it is neither. The Tamil prose version might be interesting purely from the linguistic point of view if the date of its origin would be given or at least the problem attacked. However, the preface does not state any particulars about the date and authorship of any of the works published in the book.

Concluding I am sorry to say that, according to my opinion, the profound scholarship and great talents of T. N. Subramaniam, who has disclosed real treasures of Tamil epigraphy, might have been used in a much better and much more useful way.

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